

HALESOWEN CHRONICLE



Thursday, May 23, 2013

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Movie shack

Paul builds a cinema in his own garden shed

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Future folk

Musician leading fight for survival of small clubs

Page 6



Great girls

Yeltz ladies in comeback to grab the league title

Page 40



Clean up then pay up over old pub

DUDLEY Council could step in to clean up a pub in the town, before serving the site's owner with the bill for the works.

Residents say the boarded-up King Arthur pub, on the corner of Priory Road and Birmingham New Road, has become a stain on the area since it closed two years ago.

This week Councillor Ken Finch promised to meet council officers to discuss how approved plans for the pub, which was damaged by fire in January, could be brought forward.

He said the council was having difficulty contacting the site owner – but if it failed, would take matters into its own hands and clean up the site, passing on the bill to the owner.

Councillor Finch said: "The pub stands at the gateway to the town, but rather than welcome people in, it looks a horrible, decaying site which does no good for us."

"The building is damaged and there is mess lying around the site and on the car park – something needs to be done because it has gone on too long."

In December, then-owner Amrinder Singh was given consent to demolish the pub. Last June, Dudley Council granted permission for a 70-bedroom hotel at the site.

Prank alert for schools

POLICE are urging schools in Dudley and Sandwell to warn pupils of the dangers of a foolish prank in which youngsters on skates hitch rides on the back of buses.

The alert follows a photograph featured in the local press showing five teenagers clinging to the back of a bus on the Quarry Bank border with Cradley Heath, being towed along by their skates.

West Midlands Police Inspector Dez Lambert said: "These youths are putting themselves and other road users in danger, which is an offence."

● Stunt – Page 2

BLAZE DESTROYS 120 SCRAP CARS

by Andrew Turton

A SUSPECTED arson attack at a breaker's yard in Cradley has destroyed 120 cars.

Around 50 firefighters tackled the blaze, which ripped through Saltbrook Motors at 11.30 on Tuesday night.

Old Land Rovers, Renault Meganas and Ford Fiestas were among the 120 scrap cars set alight.

Flames reached 70ft high as crews described being met by an 'intense heat' as they arrived at the scene.

Firefighters were forced to break into the premises by smashing locks on the main gate. But as they did, explosions from petrol tanks inside the scrap cars forced them to find another way into the site.

Crews said the vehicles were engulfed with flames that were spreading from car to car. There was also concern that flames could spread to surrounding woodland.

First on the scene were crews from Brierley Hill, Cradley Heath and Stourbridge.

But due to the severity of the blaze, extra crews had to be drafted in.

Explosions

Watch commander for Cradley Heath, Rudy Parkes, said they had anticipated the danger and began dousing the burning debris that had been scattered around the site by the explosions.

Mr Parkes said: "It was a difficult fire to tackle because of the explosions we faced. As soon as we dealt with one, another one happened."

"There was quite a lot of debris flying through the air, which meant initially we had to stand back and take precautions."

"Flames were reaching up towards the trees so our main concern was ensuring the flames did not spread to the trees."

"One crew from Brierley Hill entered the rear of the premises and started to tackle the blaze while we approached from the front. Our fire crews did a good job to get on top of the blaze quickly and we had it under control within an hour and a half."

Mr Parkes said it was believed that arsonists had started the fire. "We believe people got in through fencing at the side. We have known of incidents here in the past."

The majority of the crews left the incident at 3.30am on Wednesday – but one team had been back since to check the fire had not reignited. The site was taped off by crews. Police officers searched the yard for evidence as they launched an investigation into



Firefighters at Saltbrook Motors scrapyards, in Saltbrook Road, Cradley tackle the blaze which destroyed 120 cars

the blaze. On Wednesday the owner of the business was on site surveying the damage but said he was too upset to speak about the fire. Firefighters returned to the scene to sift through the wreckage.

But watch commander Rudy Parkes, from Cradley Heath Fire Station, said the blaze was started deliberately by vandals who broke into the yard. There was a similar fire at the firm when offenders broke

three years ago which left 50 cars destroyed by fire. The firm had previously tried to win permission from Dudley Council to erect a 8.5ft high fence around the site to make it more secure.

Debris had been left strewn across the yard with the only the metal shell of many cars remaining after upholstery and seats were burned away. The fierce heat had melted metal and tyres on vehicles.

Mr Parkes said: "There was petrol in the tanks which ignited causing the explosions."

"There were three seats of fire inside the yard so it made it difficult for us to tackle initially." Crews had been able to save remaining vehicles from being set alight nearer the front of the premises.

Mr Parkes said teams had returned to the scene this morning to check for further signs of smoke.

Soldier's wife now in battle to keep TA

A SOLDIER'S wife leading a campaign to save a threatened Territorial Army regiment, which has a base in Dudley, said it would be 'disrespectful' to generations of service personnel if it was axed.

The Royal Mercian and Lancastrian Yeomanry, which has existed more than 200 years, could be disbanded under plans being considered by defence ministers.

The TA regiment, which has a squadron base in Vicar Street, Dudley, could be split up to allow for the creation of a Scottish Yeomanry.

Dudley's A Squadron is the only remaining TA Royal Armoured Corps Squadron to be in the West Midlands.

Mother-of-three Hannah Bragg, whose husband Major Tom Bragg leads A Squadron, has taken up the fight to petition ministers in Whitehall.

More than 900 people have signed an online petition that Mrs Bragg, a 35-year-old housewife living in Buckinghamshire, set up against plans to axe the regiment. She wants to reach 100,000 which could trigger a House of Commons debate. Major Bragg, aged 36, works full-time as a registrar plastic surgeon at Stoke Mandeville Hospital.

The petition can be found at: petitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/49480.

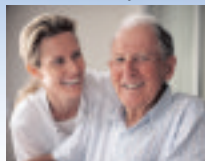
A memorial to workers

A NEW memorial will be built in Dudley honouring people who have lost their lives in the workplace as part of national commemoration.

Plans will be discussed for a site for the tribute after Dudley Council leader David Sparks signalled his approval.

The announcement comes after the town held a ceremony marking Workers' Memorial Day, led by the Dudley branch of the TUC last month. It could be positioned in Dudley's Coronation Gardens.

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Zoo sets its sights on Hippodrome

DUDLEY Zoo has revealed multi-million pound plans for a new education and conference centre on the site of the former Dudley Hippodrome.

It comes as campaigners, who are battling to save the theatre, were given hope that some of their ideas could be used at other venues in the borough. Peter Suddock, the zoo's chief executive, said the plans would incorporate a geology centre with access to the limestone Stores Cavern

beneath the zoo. It would help highlight the Castle Hill's unique history as part of a prehistoric seabed, educating visitors on creatures called the trilobite, also known as the Dudley Bug.

Major £10 million plans for Castle Hill are already under way with a new visitor entrance in the pipeline to help the zoo link up better with the Black Country Living Museum and Dudley Canal Trust. Mr Suddock

said a European funding bid for the new centre would be submitted next year with a hope that work would get underway in 2015/16 and be integrated into the Castle Hill programme.

He said: "It's all come at a great time - we will be able to incorporate the plans into our new entrance and car park and the new centre will be a natural addition to the development." Dudley Council leader Coun-

cillor David Sparks said the council was committed to working with the Friends of Dudley Hippodrome to accommodate some of their proposals, such as theatre workshops, at other venues. But he added an independent survey of the campaigners business plan for running the theatre said the council would have to subsidise the project to the tune of between £5m to £10m which he said could not be justified.

Theatre campaigners refute £10m estimate

Campaigners have disputed figures claiming the council would have to pay up to £10million to help renovate and reopen the former Dudley Hippodrome.

Dudley Council bosses are ploughing ahead with plans to demolish it as Dudley Zoo announced proposals for a new educational and conference centre on the land.

Traders are not happy at changes to parking bays

TRADERS in Stourbridge have condemned the conversion of some on-street parking spaces to disabled bays.

They say it is a blow to business as they brace themselves for the arrival of Tesco.

But other shoppers, including those with mobility problems, say business owners need to be prepared to compromise to improve the town's accessibility.

It comes as prices at council car parks in the borough will increase by 20 per cent.

Two additional disabled bays have been created in Market Street to make a total of four in the road near Stourbridge Town Hall.

Highways bosses say they have also experimented by adding a further six in Drury Lane, past St Thomas' Church.

But shoppers have already made complaints to business owners following the move.

Nigel Higham, who runs Crown Butchers, in Market Street, said: "I can't see the sense in it."

Stourbridge Township Council chairman Margaret Scott, who has mobility problems, said: "I don't think having four disabled bays in Market Street is overkill."

Council leader Councillor David Sparks said the authority could not afford to help fund the reopening of the Castle Hill theatre 'in the current climate'.

It comes after an independent assessment of the campaigners' business plan claimed the authority would need to subsidise the reopening of the Hippodrome as well as making an upfront investment of between £5m and £10m. But campaign leader Geoff Fitzpatrick said the group had not demanded cash from the authority.

Talks

Friends of Dudley Hippodrome members intend to hold fresh talks with council officers on May 29.

Councillor Sparks said: "As leader of the council, I am very well aware that there are many people that would like to see the former Hippodrome restored and reopened as a successful theatre."

"However, what the independent study has told us is this would require an upfront capital investment of millions of pounds and that even then the building would require a significant subsidy from the council, which in the current climate I think most people will appreciate is something we cannot commit to."

But campaign leader Geoff Fitzpatrick dismissed the figures revealed, saying campaigners have been unable to get a fully costed estimate for the works, due to the uncertainty of the theatre's future.

Bus stunt youths risking lives



The group of teenagers hitch a dangerous lift clinging on to the back of a bus

MOTORISTS and passers-by were stopped in their tracks as a group of teenagers dived with death when they hitched a bus ride - clinging to the back on their skates.

Onlookers watched in horror as the 'foolish five' travelled along brazenly for more than half a mile in heavy traffic from Cradley Heath to Quarry Bank.

The National Express bus company, describing it as a 'very dangerous' act, revealed it has had to mount extra inspections in the Quarry Bank area, where similar incidents have been happening, to nip it in the bud.

Julia Chance, who took photographs, was even mooned amid the traffic when the 'hitchhikers', believed to be in their early teens, spotted her using her mobile phone

camera. She had seen the group hang on to a flap above the bus engine as it left Cradley Heath bus station and they carried on being pulled along as the vehicle travelled along Forge Lane to High Street, Quarry Bank.

"I couldn't believe what I was seeing - and neither could car drivers on the road," said 42-year-old Miss Chance of Hill Street, Quarry Bank.

She added: "If one of them had fallen off, they could have gone under the wheels of the bus or another vehicle. They really were the foolish five." National Express West Midlands spokesman Jack Kelly said: "This act is very dangerous and we urge those taking part to stop it immediately. Our drivers are reporting these incidents as soon as they are aware of them."

Addict is grabbed trying to steal fuel

A DRUG addict stole fuel from a petrol station three times in four days but was caught on his fourth attempt, a court heard.

Brett Hill had already stolen £178.69 of fuel from the Tesco petrol station in Hagley Road, Oldswinford, when he pulled up and began to fill his car and two jerry cans on May 1.

But staff recognised his blue Vauxhall Astra and ran out to apprehend him before police arrived to arrest him.

At Dudley Magistrates Court, Hill, aged 37, of Caledonia, Quarry Bank, pleaded guilty to three charges of making off with petrol without payment.

He also admitted one charge of attempted theft and driving without insurance and a licence.

Mr Paul Selby, defending, said Hill had been addicted to heroin for 15 years but had managed to hold down a job in the motor industry until being made redundant last year.

He said: "He needed petrol to look for a vehicle for a new business he was looking to set up. He wants to sort out his lifestyle and get off the drugs."

Sentencing was adjourned until June 17 for reports.

Charity ball raises cash

THE parents of a child wheelchair-bound by a crippling spinal disease have raised thousands through a sold-out charity ball.

About 180 people attended the event at the David Lloyd Leisure Centre in Brierley Hill.

It was organised by Paula and Toby Flatman, whose three-year-old daughter Hollie suffers from spinal muscular atrophy - a muscle wasting condition which damages the spinal cord.

The couple, of Burns Close, Stourbridge, set up the event as a first fundraiser and pulled in £4,135.

Boy hurt by fall

A BOY was hurt when he fell 12ft from a tree at an event in Stourbridge. Paramedics were called to the Global Day of Prayer event at Mary Stevens Park at 4.30pm on Sunday. The boy suffered chest injuries and was taken to Dudley's Russells Hall Hospital.

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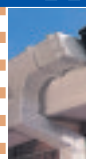
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Owners of town bar in trouble

THE operator of a Stourbridge town centre bar has gone into administration.

Administrators from Deloitte were appointed last week at Atmosphere Bars and Clubs, which is based in Milton Keynes.

The firm runs 19 Chicago bars across the country including one in Ryemarket, Stourbridge for which a buyer is now being sought.

The Stourbridge bar only opened in September after Atmosphere spent £500,000 on refurbishing the former Que Pasa restaurant and bar.

It created 25 jobs and marked the return of the chain to the town after the former Chicago Rock Cafe in the High Street shut in 2010 when parent company 3DE collapsed and went into administration.

Daniel Butters, joint administrator and partner at Deloitte, said: "We are continuing to trade the business and all venues remain open whilst seeking a sale as a going concern."

JLR opens testing site

JAGUAR Land Rover has opened a new engineering test centre in Dubai.

The car maker will conduct extreme hot weather vehicle research, development and testing at the new site.

It is part of a major investment programme under way for the manufacturer including a £500 million engine manufacturing plant at the i54 site on the Wolverhampton and South Staffordshire border.

JLR director of engineering technical services Martyn Hollingsworth said: "Our new facility in Dubai is four times the size of the previous test centre and will enable us to enhance our testing of future products and technologies. "The engineering team is focused on the quality and durability of our products."

Museum tickets

SEASON tickets are to be issued at the Museum of Carpet in Kidderminster due to an increasing demand for return visits. Tours of the Stour Vale Mill building in Green Street, which houses the museum, are proving so popular staff have decided to offer season tickets which will last until the end of the year.

Paper prescriptions to be replaced digitally

HEALTH Secretary Jeremy Hunt has signalled the end of outdated paper prescriptions and notes with the announcement of a £260 million fund for hospitals to help the NHS go digital within five years.

Mr Hunt said using the latest technology could make the NHS safer by cutting down on the number of prescription blunders. He recently revealed 11 people died in the NHS in England last year after being given the wrong medication and the new money will be used to help develop 'electronic prescribing'.

This will mean doctors can use technology to order prescriptions. It will also be

used to help hospitals develop new electronic patient systems so medics from different departments in a hospital can access patient information quickly and easily.

Eventually it will be rolled out to GP surgeries, marking an end to the written prescription.

The new system will see computer-generated prescriptions, using barcodes unique to each patient, being sent by doctors directly to pharmacies.

Mr Hunt said: "This fund will allow doctors and nurses to make the NHS safer by harnessing the very latest technology.

"In many places, right now, a paramedic picking up a frail elderly woman who has had a fall will not always know she has dementia, because he or she cannot access her notes. Or a doctor is prescribing the wrong drugs because they don't know what drugs their patient is already on.

"If we are to improve patient safety then we must allow the NHS to have access to the best tools available and this fund will help them achieve that."

Medical director of NHS England Professor Sir Bruce Keogh said: "This new fund will help patients get better and safer care by giving clinicians access to the right

information when they need it most.

"Supporting hospitals to replace outdated paper systems for notes and prescriptions will help relieve patients' frustration at having to repeat their medical and medication history over and over again, often in the same hospital, because their records aren't available.

"Expanding the use of electronic prescribing of medications in hospitals will help improve safety, save lives and save taxpayer's money."

Mr Hunt has previously set out ambitions to make the NHS 'paperless'.

Paul sheds light on silver screen with home cinema

IT'S a film buff's dream – a cinema at the bottom of the garden. That's just what Paul Slim has created, by kitting out his shed with a huge screen and surround sound.

The 36-year-old originally kitted out the living room of his Amblecote home with the hi-tech equipment but had to find a new home for it when his girlfriend, Nic, moved in. The Carphone Warehouse worker quickly hit on the idea of turning his shed into the perfect venue for him and friends to enjoy films on the big screen.

The project took around three months and £15,000 to complete with Mr Slim, who used to run the Movie Junction store in Stourbridge, doing a lot of the work himself.

It's fitted with four sofas and a 119-inch screen, a 3D projector and 11.2 surround sound.

The shed also has a lobby where Mr Slim stores his huge collection of 3,000 DVDs and Blu-Rays.

Visitors can also put on slippers or get hold of a hot or cold drink from the foyer just as they would in a real cinema.

It is also kitted out with a selection of movie memorabilia which Mr Slim has collected over the years.

In one corner are large cut-outs of Boba Fett and C-3PO from the Star Wars franchise while shelves are packed with models from Pirates of the Caribbean, including Captain Jack Sparrow, Kill Bill and The

by Lee Watton

Simpsons. The collection also features figures from Shaun of the Dead and V for Vendetta.

Mr Slim's design for his shed has proved such a hit it is now in the running for a top prize in a nationwide competition to find Britain's best sheds.

The winner will be judged by Channel 4's Sarah Beeny and Kevin McCloud along with a host of enthusiasts.

Mr Slim said he had been a movie fan for years and had built up a collection of more than 3,000 titles.

"I designed the shed which was then built by an outside company who did all the woodwork and installed it," he said.

"I did everything else including all the installations, wiring and calibrating the sound and vision."

The shed can hold around 20 people comfortably.

Vote for Mr Slim's shed by logging on to website www.readersheds.co.uk



Paul Slim, from Stourbridge, sits back in his sofa to watch a film on his big screen in the cinema in his shed



Paul at the entrance to the cinema in the garden



Paul's massive collection of DVDs adorn the walls

NEWS in brief

It's a family of mayors in town

THE new mayor of Dudley is following in his brother's footsteps as the borough's first citizen.

Councillor Alan Finch was elected the new mayor of Dudley at a civic ceremony in the town and among those watching was his oldest brother, and fellow councillor Ken Finch, mayor of Dudley in 1998/99.

The younger Finch, aged 60, said: "This is a very proud day for my family, as the second Councillor Finch to be Mayor of this borough."

Group invitation to young actors

YOUNG actors are invited to audition for a new production by a South Staffordshire drama group.

The Blue Branches Drama Academy in Brewwood is inviting children between seven and 14 to audition for their forthcoming production of A Little Princess.

The classic novel by Frances Hodgson Burnett tells of how young Sara Crew is reduced from wealth to poverty.

Call 01902 851 682 or visit www.bluebranch.esdramaacademy.co.uk

Drivers targeted in road crackdown

DRIVERS speeding, using their mobile phones at the wheel or failing to wear a seatbelt were pulled over by police as part of a day of action in Dudley.

Police joined with West Midlands Fire Service to carry out the initiative in the Castle and Priory areas of Dudley. Out of more than 50 motorists stopped, 16 were speeding, five were on their phones, and 24 were not wearing seat belts.


Doughnuts shop is helping charity

A SHOP is donating money to charity for every bag of doughnuts sold in a national campaign.

To mark National Doughnut Week, Green's Doughnuts at the Holly Bush Garden Centre, Sharnhall is giving 10p to the Children's Trust for every bag sold. The scheme has raised more than £755,000 for charity.

£522 for the RNLI

THE Royal National Lifeboat Institution's annual flag day in Stourbridge centre raised £522. Stourbridge branch chairman Chris Fonteyn said, the generosity of shoppers was apparent.



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NEWS

THE BEST
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RHODES

THIS blog is coming to you, Wifi permitting, from the island of Inchmurrin on Loch Lomond. As every traveller knows, Scotland can be gloriously sunny in May. This is not one of those Mays. I am reminded of the traditional Scottish greeting to holidaymakers: "Och, but ye've just missed a beautiful fortnight."

□ □ □

THERE are three of us boating around the isles; myself, my younger brother and my old mate Lennox. We are not as young as once we were and we did the sum of all the medications we are taking to ward off the ailments of middle age. This is Three Men and Eighty-Four Tablets on a Boat. Some vessels announce their arrival with horns or whistles. Ours rattles.

□ □ □

ON OUR Highland island, the storm struck at precisely 4.28am, whamming into the side of our cottage like a giant boot and striking dumb a flock of cackling oystercatchers on the beach. The little black-and-white birds had been joyously celebrating the dawn and then thought better of it and dashed for cover. By breakfast, Loch Lomond was a frenzy of wild water, white horses erupting from shore to shore with vicious little squalls corkscrewing through the tiny harbour. Not the ideal sailing day.

□ □ □

I WAS reminded of the unkind old joke. What's that special word the Scots use to describe the conditions when it's perishing cold, the rain is lashing down and the wind blows you off your feet? Summer.

□ □ □

NO surprises about Olivia Colman winning two awards at the Baftas. I bet she'll be back in 2014 for her excellent performance in this year's murder mystery, Broadchurch. And here's another prediction. Watch out in 2014 for a best-supporting award for that old trouser Anton Lesser as the senior police officer in Endeavour. He doesn't just play the part; he becomes it, bringing all sorts of twitching prejudices and paranoia to it. What a pro.

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

Gran thought number was up then Ben came

AS it was 'eyes down look in', little did Halesowen grandmother Shirley Gardener know the young bingo hall assistant she had only ever waved at before was about to save her life.

by Louise Jew

Ben Washington raced to give the kiss of life to the 66-year-old when she suffered a heart attack on a Ring and Ride bus as she left the Mecca bingo hall in High Street, Brierley Hill.

The first aider - who had never before used his life-saving training 'for real' - clambered over the bus seats to reach her. Doctors said his actions bought her the vital five minutes of treatment that saved her life. "He's Ben, my guardian angel," said Shirley, a retired cleaner, of Beecher Road East, who has now met the amusement arcade team leader to thank him and give him a grateful kiss.

The story of how Ben saved her life brought tears to the eyes of around 400 fellow bingo players when her husband, Richard, stepped up in front of them, flanked by Shirley, their four children and some of their grandchildren, to praise Ben's actions.

The family presented the 33-year-old with three bottles of his favourite tipple - Jaegermeister.

Shirley, who has been a regular at the Mecca for around 15 years, was happy with a £55 win at bingo with

her daughter Kerry, aged 42, on the night of April 29, when she began to feel breathless as they left.

She got on the bus with Kerry, of Highfield Crescent, Colley Gate, but then collapsed. Ben, who trained in first aid with St John Ambulance six years ago, raced to the rescue.

Ben, who lives with his wife, Denise, and six-year-old son Cain in Norwood Road, Brockmoor, Brierley Hill, said: "Shirley said 'I'm going, I'm gone' and stopped breathing. That was the scariest bit, so I put her on her back and did CPR, including the kiss of life."

As Shirley began to regain consciousness, two other bingo customers - a hospital worker and a paramedic - came to help him, followed by an ambulance crew.

Shirley was rushed to Dudley's Russells Hall Hospital, where a medical team spent a further 45 minutes resuscitating her.

"The doctor came out and said another five minutes and she wouldn't have made it," said husband Richard, aged 74, a retired packing case maker.



Shirley Gardener, who was given first aid by amusements team leader Ben Washington, left, and her husband, Richard, who wrote in to thank the staff at Mecca Bingo

Over the limit man 'a danger to public'

A CONVICTED drink-driver has been described as a danger to the public after he was again caught driving while over the limit.

Simon Shaw was arrested after being stopped by officers driving on a Sedgley road last month.

The 24-year-old, who had been convicted of drink-driving 18 months earlier admitted driving while over the limit, at Dudley Magistrates Court.

Sentencing him District Judge Mr Graham Wilkinson judge said he was 'a danger to the public'.

He said Shaw, of Mason Street, Bilston, had been spotted by officers as he drove his Renault Clio down the middle of Bilston Street on April 17. After a short pursuit they saw him stop outside a house on Greenway, the court was told.

A breath test found 59 micrograms of alcohol per 100 millilitres of Shaw's breath, almost twice the legal limit of 35. Shaw was also banned for three years.

Sales increased

BREWERS Marston's announced an increase in sales - despite revealing profits had been knocked by bad weather during January and March. Despite this the Wolverhampton beer and pubs group, which brews Banks's and Pedigree, has plans for more new pub-restaurants.

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Zoo's boss among the top chiefs

THE chief executive of Dudley Zoo is among the winners in the West Midlands Director of the Year Awards.

Peter Suddock, aged 66, won in the not-for-profit category of the annual Institute of Directors' awards, which were announced at Warwickshire Cricket Club's Edgbaston ground.

Paul Hutchens, managing director of Kidderminster-based Eco2Solar, won an environment-based award.

The overall director of the year was Chris Li, chief executive and founder of Coventry business Luxury for Less.

The winners of each category will go forward to represent the West Midlands region at the IoD's national competition to be held in London on October 11.

Mr Suddock has been the zoo's chief executive for 20 years and has described it as 'the best job in the world.'

The judges recognised him as an outstanding leader with a real passion for his business.

The attraction receives 225,000 visitors each year.

Singers in show

THE Starlight Singers will be performing songs from the shows at Kidderminster's Rose Theatre on May 31 featuring hits from Miss Saigon, Les Misérables and Wicked. Tickets, are £10, and available on 01562 743745 or via www.rosetheatre.co.uk

Divers step back in time to try out an old birthday suit

THEY looked like they were stepping from the set of 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea – and Captain Nemo in his submarine Nautilus could just pop up a few yards away.

But this was a very modern group of divers, who took turns for a dip wearing an antique heavy brass helmet and lead-bottomed boots in a chilly quarry lake.

Nine men, including seven members of the Black Country Divers, Halesowen were celebrating the 40th birthday of Dan Higgins, as well as the diamond anniversary of the British Sub Aqua Club (BSAC).

Air was pumped by hand down a long tube to the clumsy-looking, 80-year-old helmet, while members of the Historical Diving Society kept a close eye on the expedition.

The nostalgic dive was the brainchild of Black Country Divers' diving officer Dan, who lives in the 'Old Quarter' district of Stourbridge and is senior charge nurse in intensive care at Birmingham's Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

Swimmingly

His party all agreed the exercise, at the National Diving Centre, Stoney Cove, Leicestershire, went swimmingly.

It was a sunny day, which meant underwater visibility was about five or six metres, and the divers said the 10C (50F) temperature of the lake was 'not too uncomfortable'.

Dan said: "We were wearing a large brass diving helmet dating from 1932, which I believe was once used by Royal Navy divers and could even have been on underwater operations during the Second World War."

"We also had on old-style heavy diving suit made of canvas over rubber."

"Although it wasn't actually old, it is an exact reproduction of kit used 60 to 80 years ago. We kept warm by wearing fleece suits



Jonathan Flood, of Black Country Divers, is helped into the antique suit by John Smillie, left, and Pop Yarrow, of the Historical Diving Society

underneath. On our feet we had on heavy boots with lead soles which helped keep us down on the bottom.

"The air was pumped down into the helmet through a long pipe from a hand-operated machine on the surface. A couple of guys were doing that."

"Once we were down there we didn't go very deep, just about six metres to a shelf which goes around the edge, and spent the time mooching about trying to get used to the equipment, which was so different from the lightweight kit we have these days."

"It was really heavy and all the equipment we were wearing weighed about 13 stone, but it was fascinating to see how well it all worked and everything went without a hitch thanks to the group from the Historical Diving Society."

"It was a really fantastic experience and we're all really glad we did it."

"In fact, we enjoyed ourselves so much that some of us are now thinking of joining the Historical Diving Society so we can wear the equipment again."

The appropriately named Jonathan



Jonathan Flood is lowered into the water by John Smillie of the Historical Diving Society

Flood, aged 37, a pre-sales consultant, from Halesowen and fellow member of Black Country Divers, said: "It was a brilliant experience. Getting into the really old equipment, knowing someone was pumping air down from the surface from a beautiful looking pump made of wood and brass was unique."

"When they were bolting you into your helmet it was disconcerting."

Black Country Divers, which has about 30 members, meet at Halesowen Leisure Centre every Wednesday at 9pm.

NEWS in brief

Burn calories at fitness sessions

TV RUGBY pundit Austin Healey has backed a new campaign from British Military Fitness (BMF), which will include sessions in Stourbridge.

The organisation, which runs military-style outdoor fitness classes at Stevens Park, Wollescote, aims to inspire people to get into the open air and burn off calories at Start events. Stourbridge Start sessions will take place in the park on June 1, June 29 and July 20, all starting at 9.30am. Former England and Lions player Healey said: "I want us to inspire people to swap their slippers for trainers."

Have splashing time on course

CHILDREN from the age of four upwards will be able to have a splashing time in a swimming course in Stourbridge.

Dudley Council is launching three courses, each of four 30-minute sessions, at the town's Crystal Leisure Centre, from May 28 to 31. Beginners' courses will run at 9.30am and 10.30am, with improvers at 10am. Each course costs £18.80 per child, with a 50 per cent off for Options Plus cardholders.

Dixons' sales up

CURRYS and PC World owner Dixons said the company was in the best shape it had been in 'many years' after reporting sales growth in the last 12 months. Sales across the group rose by four per cent.

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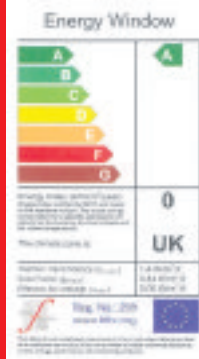
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NEWS FEATURE

IN MY VIEW

WITH
MARK
ANDREWS



THE most interesting thing to come out of the Chris Huhne case was the nature of the institution in which he was held.

According to one of the television news reporters, it is up to prisoners whether they want to lock the doors at Leyhill Prison in Gloucestershire at night. Presumably this is to keep the riff-raff out. After all, you wouldn't want any wrong 'uns spoiling the party, would you?

The newsman also said the prison was very proud of its workshop, which knocked out an excellent line in window frames.

So this is a prison where the inmates are free to come and go as they please, and where they spend their days making window frames.

And suddenly it struck me. There are plenty of institutions like this all over the West Midlands, only the inmates are in the main, honest law-abiding people who would never dream of perverting the course of justice, or scarring the countryside with wind turbines or anything like that.

Only round here, we call them factories.

IN WHAT must surely be one of the most imaginative claims under the Human Rights Act yet, Iraqi drug dealer Hesham Mohammed Ali, claimed he should be allowed to remain in the UK because he had tattoos.

Ali, who arrived via a people-smuggling racket 13 years ago, had his application for asylum turned down and was handed a four-year sentence for dealing class A drugs, had a half-naked woman tattooed on his chest. As you do.

In Iraq, people with tattoos get stoned," he told the court.

Trust me, they do in Wolverhampton as well.

MEMO to the gentleman in front of me at Wolverhampton post office. Having your mobile phone on speaker in a public place is seldom a good idea, particularly when you are going through the security questions with your bank.

And given that everybody in the post office heard your name, address, postcode, date of birth and your mother's maiden name, it might not be a bad idea to update your security settings.

HERE'S a business idea you never see on The Apprentice.

Self-styled 'bacontrepreneurs' Justin and Dave have recently launched their new line in bacon-scented sun cream.

"Science has shown us that 10 out of 10 people prefer the smell of bacon to coconut, which makes this the most anticipated new product of the summer," says a press release for J&D's Bacon Sunscreen.

What a load of codswallop. Who'd want to smell like fried bacon? Now pork scratchings and you might be on to something...



Some of the delegates raising their concerns



Roger Davies from Yorkshire who played at the event



Jez Lowe headlined the showcase concert at Folk21

Folk for the future is what drives John

Folk clubs and small venues feel under threat. **DANNY FARRAGHER** spoke to the musician leading the fightback

THEY say an avalanche can start from just a single noise and while it may not be quite that dramatic, a rumble was started on Facebook by musician John Richards almost two years ago which turned into a national movement.

As part of this movement people from all over the Midlands gathered in Wolverhampton determined to find solutions that are crucial to their survival. John, aged 62, originally from Coseley and now living in Worfield, Bridgnorth, has been on the folk circuit for more than 40 years and is passionate about the tradition and even more so about the local clubs where new acts cut their teeth and which he feels are being ignored both by the folk circuit generally and the national and local media specifically.

Musicians

Folk21 saw its first West Midlands Regional Conference descend on the Newhampton Arts Centre, Dunkley Street, Whitmore Reans where promoters, club organisers, musicians and folk fans came together.

The all-day conference was split into two parts with the delegates and visitors having their say in two seminar-style gatherings and then the evening putting on a showcase for new acts from around the country.

So where does the problem lie? "The basis of Folk21 was that I was getting more and more depressed over a period of time as to the way the folk clubs were getting treated as compared to the festivals, the folk awards, the bigger concerts, radio and TV and I thought we were given very much the wrong end of the stick and that something needed to be done about it," explained John.

"I blogged this and a lot of like-minded



Musician John Richards who is leading the fight for survival for local folk clubs

people came forward and we decided something needed to be done, but what could we do?

"What we decided was to become a catalyst for co-operation. The whole basis of the regional days was just that, so that we can co-operate and see how we can start to solve the problems that the clubs and venues are facing."

Since Folk21 was started it has organised regional days all over the country; in Yorkshire, East Midlands, East Anglia, London and there is soon to be a Devon and South West meeting.

The perception of local folk clubs is very

much at the forefront of what John and many others see as a major part of the problem.

John believes the local folk club scene has been dropped by the media because it is seen as a minority interest.

"The publicity which was so important to us has gone, so we are being battered on a local level," says John. "Even worse is that on a national level we are just criticised and laughed at. For example, BBC2 Folk Awards dropped the Best Folk Club of the Year, they don't talk about us any more. We have been referred to as the old 'beards and sandals' brigade which has

nothing to do with modern folk."

"Now that is stopping younger people from getting involved in what we do, and my passion for this after playing and running folk clubs for 40 years is I want there to be continuity so the 'missing' 30-somethings and younger have a 'database' of folk clubs which they can carry forward for the future, because the way things are going they won't have, and that would be a tragic waste."

People came from many parts of the Midlands, South Staffordshire, Nottingham, Leicester, Bromsgrove, Willenhall and Wolverhampton to name but a few, and all seemed to have a common aim of making folk clubs the best experience they can be. Common concerns which emerged were the average age of the people at folk venues and the lack of publicity and communication between organisers up and down the country.

Problems

But John has no illusions about the enormity of the task.

"The main aim of the day was to get West Midlands folk club organisers together for the first time and to get them to share their problems."

"We also wanted to explore how the clubs and small venues could use publicity, PR, websites and social networking more successfully. I think we have raised a lot of issues which people are thinking and talking about and I think they will continue to talk about."

"I hope now through social networking there will be a lot of ideas posted, a sharing of ideas. Then getting everyone to start thinking about how we reach the 'non-folk' audience."

"That is absolutely key, it's what we do about raising the profile of the clubs and letting people know they can see brilliant musicians in intimate surroundings."

"My message to every folk club is to explore every possibility you can to be as professional as you can, in your publicity and marketing and make sure when you get the people into your folk club that you give them the best experience possible."

For information visit www.folk21.net

THROUGH THE YEARS

1983...

A WOLVERHAMPTON councillor made history when he attended the 50th anniversary of the opening of a library. Councillor Ted Lane was also present at the official opening of the Heath Town Library in 1933.

SOCIAL Democrat David Owen was forced to abandon a pre-election walkabout after being banned from Wolverhampton's Mander Centre. A spokesman for Mander Properties said the centre was determined to remain non-political.

A WALSALL man who saved the life of a woman drowning in a canal admitted he knew nothing about lifesaving. Robert Dyhouse said: "I just muddled through," after rescuing Gladys Lewis from the canal and performing makeshift artificial respiration."

1993...

ORGANISERS of Dudley's Beer Festival had a race against time to get 150 barrels of ale set up for the start of the three-day event. Volunteers worked into the early hours after a last-minute hitch delayed delivery of scaffolding for storing the casks.

WOLVERHAMPTON'S top stores quit the town's Chamber of Commerce and set up their own pressure group. Marks & Spencer, Beatties, Boots, BHS and C&A were among the big names to walk out in protest at soaring membership charges.

A BANANA war broke out in Wolverhampton after Gateway's supermarket cut the cost of the fruit by half. Market traders said they could not compete with the store's price of 25p a pound, which was less than the wholesale cost of bananas.

2003...

WOLVES sealed their promotion to the Premiership with an emphatic victory over Sheffield United in the play-off final in Cardiff. Goals from Mark Kennedy, Nathan Blake and Kenny Miller secured the 3-0 win.

HUNDREDS of young fans queued up for hours to meet chart-toppers Girls Aloud at Dudley's Merry Hill Centre. The band stopped off at the centre's new HMV store to sign copies of their album *Sounds of the Underground*.

A Midlands town hall was alive with the Sound of Music as 300 film enthusiasts attended the first ever Stourbridge Film Festival. Visitors from across the Black Country came dressed as nuns, Germans and members of the von Trapp family for the opening event entitled *Sing-along-a-Sound-of-Music*.

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LETTERS

Learn from the Grand campaign

PERHAPS Dudley's decision to demolish the Hippodrome reflects the cumbersome and unworkable unit the borough became after the latest gerrymandering of its boundaries.

Perhaps those absorbed against their will are delivering revenge by destroying the town itself. Clearly Dudley residents are significantly outnumbered.

One saving grace, for Wolverhampton's council, is it has twice enabled the rescue of the Grand Theatre, the jewel in the crown of the City's cultural life.

Dudley's Hippodrome deserves the same. Its supporters might learn from

what helped persuade Wolverhampton's council in the 1960s. We collected money and raised enough to convince it and the theatre's bank there was sufficient support. In only 24 hours we raised £1,800, when the average wage was around £1,000 per annum.

Here is a chance for Dudley to step out from the shadow of its neighbour Brum and perhaps an opportunity for collaboration between two real theatres between them bringing the best shows to the South Staffordshire conurbation.

Everyone in the area should support efforts to save the Hippodrome. I have to

confess I only once attended Dudley Hippodrome to see a pantomime. Dudley I recall was a bleak and windswept place apart from the street housing the Hippodrome, Cinemas and the zoo, which resembled a holiday resort.

In the same issue as you report the decision you report plans to waste millions on extending the Metro to Merry Hell. I urge people from all Dudley's neighbours to support attempts to save that theatre. Write to your MPs folks.

E.J.W. HOLLAND
First hon. Secretary of
The Grand Theatre Club

Let's make punishment match the criminal act

LET'S make the punishment fit the crime.

Instead of listing the hundreds of cases every week where I am shocked at the leniency of decisions made, may re: the Huhne/Price case.

We were told perverting the course of justice is an extremely serious thing.

All kinds of dire outcomes were prophesied for the husband and wife law breakers.

In the event, instead of years in the 'clink', they were sentenced to eight months. Then lo and behold, because they were 'model inmates', they are released after eight weeks.

Can anyone explain to me what constitutes a serious crime and why in this case were the pair given a tap on the wrists? Yes, I know the family unit may be destroyed, but that happens in most serious cases.

ALAN M. ETHERIDGE
Catholic Lane

LETTERS to the Editor

POST

Halesowen Chronicle,
Chronicle Editorial, 51-53
Queen Street, Wolverhampton
WV1 1ES

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number of the writer. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

E-MAIL

Dudley.chrons@
expressandstar.co.uk

How many more are entering illegally?

THE local heating engineer who brought the attention of the police to a lorry containing 12 illegal immigrants, who were detained at Watford Gap Services, makes you wonder just how many lorries entering Britain carrying human cargo go undetected despite increased security, or so we are told, on both sides of the channel.

One would hope that in this particular case the 10 adults plus 2 juveniles from Iran, Syria and Afghanistan would be removed from Britain in weeks, if not days, but of course it won't happen. After going through official procedures it's just as likely they will be on our streets to join the queue behind hundreds of thousands living here in the same situation. Immigration into Britain in whatever form has almost been a taboo subject since the infamous Enoch Powell speech. Since then governments of all shades have suppressed open debate on the subject for fears of being branded racist.

Consequently overwhelming public concern and the surge towards UKIP has now forced the Government to sit up and take notice, although I fear this move has come about 30 years too late.

A P CUFF, Grayling Road, Stourbridge

Political promises so easily reneged

DAVID Cameron on a visit to the USA has said only the Conservatives wanted to give people a say on a referendum.

We had his cast iron promise on this but we know cast iron is easily broken as are his promises.

America is not a member but they trade with anybody and any country anywhere in the world.

The American people would not take kindly to paying \$53 billion a day and be told what to do, how to do it and when by Brussels or anyone else, so why are we?

Conservative MPs warn that voters do not trust politicians' promises on the EU, with good reason I would say.

UKIP leader, Nigel Farage is trying to get England to be governed, and our laws and wishes adhered to once more.

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NEWS

Mother leaves her heart in notes to her daughter

SHE had travelled the world, helped clear up after a tsunami and lit up rooms everywhere she went.

But writing letters for her daughter's birthdays that she would never live to see would surely be the toughest thing 31-year-old Helen John ever did.

The 'inspirational and adventurous' young mother died of cancer just months after giving birth to baby Ella. Knowing she she had just weeks to live, Helen bravely penned poignant cards for her daughter Ella's first, 18th and 21st birthdays.

She also left four-month-old Ella a letter to read when she is older and even organised her own funeral to take the pressure off her grieving family.

The Stourbridge mother was diagnosed with liver cancer in January following the birth of her daughter and lost her battle against the illness just three months later.

Adventurous

She was unable to have chemotherapy because her body was not strong enough. Her husband Dean paid tribute to his wife's adventurous spirit and ability to put people at their ease even if they had only just met her.

Mr John, a 28-year-old self-employed electrician, said his wife had written out cards for her daughter's landmark birthdays.

They also held Ella's christening at St Mary's Church on Mother's Day this year.

Mr John said: "That was the kind of person she was. She never complained once. Once Helen had something in her mind she would just go and do it."

"Rather than be upset about what was happening she wanted to use the time positively by spending as much time as she could with me and Ella."

Mr John said he and his wife had first met at a private Christmas party



Helen studied for her PhD at the University of Birmingham



Helen John died of cancer three months after her daughter was born

seven years ago and had got chatting. "One of her friends asked me if I would look after her while she went on the dancefloor. I turned around and there was Helen," he said.

"One of things which attracted me to her most was how adventurous she was. She had visited places like Australia and Guatemala while taking time out after university."

Tsunami

"Following the tsunami a few years ago she had travelled to Thailand to help with the clean up."

Mr John said his wife had inspired him to join in her adventures and they had visited Thailand, India and Croatia. The couple had married at St Mary's Church on October 2 2010.

They both shared a passion for dancing and even took part in competitions in places such as Blackpool.

Mr John said: "Although we were

only together for seven years I feel we did more together than some other couples do in a lifetime. She will be missed by everyone. She had a lovely smile which lit up any room she walked into. She was also very talkative."

Helen, who died on April 22, attended Tividale Comprehensive and King Edward VI School, Stourbridge, then studying at Edinburgh University.

After completing her undergraduate degree at the University of Edinburgh, Helen moved to the University of Birmingham to undertake a Masters in Public Health. Following the completion of her Masters, she undertook a PhD. In early 2011 she was appointed to the post of Senior Research Facilitator in the School of Health and Population Sciences at the University of Birmingham.

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MEMORY LANE



Visitors enjoying a miniature railway when the fair was held at Lower Pendeford Farm, Coven



The sun shines on the traction engines during the first at Lower Pendeford Farm in 1995



The cover of the original programme for the fair

Steam fair may lose traction at park site

By Alec Brew

THE first weekend in June will probably see the Wolverhampton Steam and Vintage Fair held for the last time in city's West Park.

Budget cuts at Wolverhampton City Council will mean that if it is to continue for the 20th time next year, a new site will be needed.

When it began, in 1995, it was organised by the Rotary Club of Wolverhampton at Lower Pendeford Farm Coven, under the chairmanship of John Wootton.

The pattern was established right away, with steam traction engines, large and small, vintage vehicles, a large model marquee and other attractions.

There was a parade of vehicles around the farm each day.

Free buses were laid on to bring visitors from Wolverhampton, and

the event was considered a big success.

Subsequently, it came under the wing of the council's Outdoor Events Department, and was moved to West Park, and most significantly the parade of traction engines and vintage vehicles went through the city centre starting at noon on the Saturday.

The event was free to enter, and, weather permitting, grew into a spectacular annual attraction.

Each element of the event continued to be organised by volunteers with Councillor Malcolm Gwinnett and Jacki Wynn of Outdoor Events playing major roles, not least when Councillor Gwinnett lead the parade as mayor.

The basic elements remained in place, with a large outdoor fair in one field, and the steam and vintage vehicles in another, but new attractions were to be added, like an American Indian Village and an aircraft section organised by the Staffordshire Aircraft Restoration Team.

The parade brought startled shoppers to a standstill as steam rollers, armoured vehicles and fire engines suddenly rolled through Queen Square and around the city centre, the last such city centre parade in the country.

Council budget cuts have halved the budget for this year and will be cut altogether next year, so that if John Wootton and his team of volunteers organise the event in 2014 it will have to be elsewhere.



'American Indians' sampling a Hunter jet fighter cockpit in 2006



Lewis Squires of Tettenhall in the cockpit of a microlight

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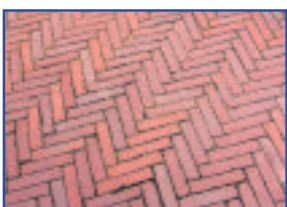


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NEWS

Dambusters flypast



A Lancaster bomber flying over RAF Cosford



Spectators at Cosford watching the aerial spectacle

THE 70th anniversary of the Dambusters raid was celebrated this afternoon with a flypast at the RAF Museum, Cosford.

A Lancaster bomber performed the flypast just before 12.30pm last Thursday, flying over the museum three times before thundering off into the distance. About 800 onlookers were there to watch.

It was the first time the museum has seen the iconic bombers perform a flypast. The flypast marks 70 years since 19 Lancaster bombers took off from RAF Scampton in Lincolnshire, on a mission to destroy German dams with a revolutionary 'bouncing' bomb.

Paul Stratford, 62, from Lichfield, said he went to the museum with his daughter and grandson. He said: "It flew very low, and it looked really big."

Philip Bebb, from Shrewsbury, was there with his wife Rosemary. He had previously been in the RAF and trained at Shawbury in 1959. He said: "It's wonderful to see and it was flying quite a lot lower than normal."

Families are £44 a week worse off, say figures

PEOPLE are up to £44 a week worse off since 2010 because of rising inflation new figures claim.

Workers in Staffordshire are up to £2,288 a year worse off in real terms while people in the Black Country are between £26 and £36 a week poorer. The figures, from the Office of National Statistics, have been seized upon by the GMB trade union which said soaring fuel and food costs had been outstripping pay increases, leading to a cut in living standards.

Three years ago the average weekly wage in the West Midlands was £469 and since then it has stayed the same.

Nationally the minimum wage is set to rise 12p an hour to £6.31 from October under plans announced by business secretary Vince Cable.

However, the GMB said that to cope with inflation the average wage would need to be £507 a week, meaning people are on average £38 a week or £1,976 a year worse off. Staffordshire has been the hardest hit.

In 2010 the average wage was £495 but it has actually fallen by £4. Coupled with inflation people are now £44 a week worse off. In Dudley wages went up from an average £451 a week to £455

by Daniel Wainwright

over two years but inflation means people are £1,664 a year worse off.

In Sandwell wages rose from £418 to £425 but people are £1,352 a year worse off on average.

Walsall people are £1,924 a year on average worse off due to inflation and a cut in wages from £424 to £419.

Wolverhampton saw wages rise from £424 a week to £431 but inflation wiped out the improvement and left people £27 a week or £1,404 a year worse off.

The cuts has been calculated taking into account wage increases and inflation. Political officer for the GMB union Stephanie Peacock accused the Government of not doing enough.

She said: "Families are suffering more than in many parts of the country because of the Government's out of touch policies."

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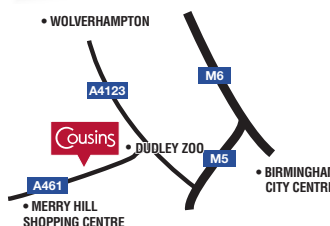
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FOCUS ON CRADLEY & CRADLEY HEATH**Rubbish has gone from shops after a campaign**

RUBBISH has been cleared from outside derelict shops in Cradley following pressure from campaigners.

Cradley Action Group lobbied Dudley Council to remove the waste from outside buildings in Colley Gate, many of which have been empty for more than a decade, with support from councillors and Stourbridge MP Margot James.

The group was formed six weeks ago after individuals raised the issue with the council but claimed they got nowhere.

Founder Richard Legiewicz said the rubbish had attracted rats and that the buildings were an "embarrassment" to the area.

He added: "We feel that in a short space of time we have made the council sit up and take note, and they are now aware that we are serious and will not just simply 'go away'."

Sweet time at museum

A CAKE workshop is being held at Haden Hill House museum.

The children's sugar craft cake decorating course will run on May 30 from 2 to 4pm at the site off the Halesowen Road, Cradley Heath.

Tickets are £7. Call 01384 569444.

Completion date revealed on controversial development

A CONTROVERSIAL £18 million retirement village being built in Cradley is due for completion by January 2015, bosses have announced.

Work began at the former Cradley High School site in Homer Hill after a contractor was appointed to build the 120-bed development for over-55s earlier this month.

by Will Ackermann

An access road through Homer Hill Park is now being widened and fencing has been installed to allow the green space to be used throughout the construction.

William Davis Ltd of Loughborough is building the extra care centre with Midland Heart and Dudley Council.

Guy Higgins, managing director at William Davis, said the contract marked a "milestone in the creation of a significant new development for Cradley".

He added: "Over the coming months we look forward to witnessing the transformation of this site and, through close collaboration with our partners, local residents, schools and commu-

nity groups, we hope to provide an exceptional facility that will become a benchmark for future extra care developments within the region."

Planning permission for the scheme was granted two months ago, despite opposition from neighbours.

Designs for the complex were scaled back after concerns it would tower over neighbouring properties.

Plans to widen the access road had also come under fire from the Friends of Homer Hill Park group, which said the green space should only be used for recreation. It will be the third Midland Heart extra care centre in the area, after schemes in Coseley and Russells Hall estate, in Dudley.

Choc full of fun at library session

ROALD Dahl's Charlie and the Chocolate Factory is being brought to life at a fun day in Cradley Heath. The Choccie Wokie Doo Doo session at Cradley Heath Library on May 30 from 2.30 to 3.15pm, will draw inspiration from the famous children's book. Free tickets are available from the library in Upper High Street and can be reserved on 01384 569316.



Jean Cooper, front, with from left Jim Warner, Assistant Secretary of Dudley TUC, Martin Lynch, Secretary, National Union of Teachers and Dawn Redfern promoting the event

Marking strike with park event

THOUSANDS of visitors are expected to attend a day of events in Cradley Heath next month to mark the anniversary of a strike by women chainmakers.

The Annual Chainmakers' Festival commemorates the women who took a stand against poor wages for the chains they made in their backyard wash houses.

It will be held at Bearmore Park on June 8 and is the third year the event has been organised.

Attractions will include archery and motorbike displays and there will be a community and craft market.

The Midlands Regional branch of the TUC has organised the commemorative festival.

Community groups or artists who would like to showcase or sell their work should contact community tent co-ordinator, Jean Cooper, on 0121 643 4342 or email jeane@pcs.org.uk.

Networking message in the fight to beat cancer

A MEMBER of staff at a Cradley Heath academy has spent three days at a conference in the Czech Republic speaking about his experiences with leukaemia.

Kris Griffin, aged 38, a director of marketing and communications at Ormiston Forge Academy, has battled the disease for five years.

He travelled to Prague where he spoke to around 150 patients, nurses and physicians about the importance of networking to increase awareness of the rare form of cancer which he battled for more than five years.

He said: "This disease is a cancer that is being treated more and more successfully with tablets."

"The potential impact of this on other forms of cancers is great so it's important we network, fundraise and support the life-saving progress made every day."

Heathens ride for mechanic

CRADLEY Heathens are racing in memory of one of a former mechanic tonight.

Darren Boocock worked with the Heathens speedway team's former world champion Greg Hancock before he died in a motorcycle accident in 2008. The team face Sheffield at Owlerton Stadium.



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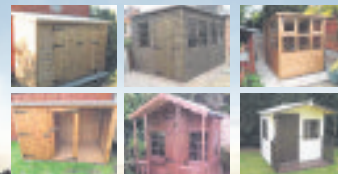
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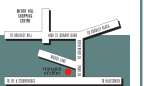
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NEWS

Dangerous road fears delays homes decision

PLANS for new homes to be built near a historic windmill have been deferred amid fears it will make one of Dudley's most dangerous roads even more treacherous.

Cameron Homes Ltd wants permission to build 14 properties on land adjacent to the Old Windmill in Vale Street, Upper Gornal. But while Dudley Council's development control committee praised the plans they were concerned it would lead to increased traffic along the street.

Members said the road was one of the narrowest in the borough with a bend along part of the carriageway already the scene of a number of accidents.

And they said while the development would be a boost to Upper Gornal they could not approve the scheme when it could have a detrimental impact on the road.

They agreed to defer making a decision on the scheme so highways officials could look at the situation. Access to the development would be via Moden Close, but the committee said cars would still have to use Vale Street.

Councillor Stuart Turner said: "This is a real problem. If there is a more dangerous road in the Dudley borough I would like to see it."

"The housing development itself is a great idea and I have no problems with it. However we simply cannot just wave something like this through without considering Vale Street. Councillor Rachel Harris said there was no available funding for improvements to the roadway and it would be unfair to ask developers to do something about it."

Co-op enjoys record sales

THE region's biggest Co-op has unveiled record sales of £943 million for the last year, with a major boost from its fledgling energy business. Midlands Co-op saw its overall sales rise 20 per cent while its Co-operative Energy arm saw sales jump to £46 million from just £7 million the year before.

Ron is top of the pots



Ron Smith who is Stourbridge and District Snooker League best player

HE has played hundreds of frames of snooker over the past 64 years and even went cue-to-cue with Alex 'Hurricane' Higgins during an exhibition match.

Grandfather-of-nine Ron Smith proved he still knows his way around a snooker table after topping the league rankings at the age of 79.

Mr Smith beat off competition from more than 60 other players to come top of the individual players table in the Stourbridge and District Snooker League.

He plays in Division One of the league with his team from Kinver Constitutional Club where he has been a team member for 45

years. Mr Smith, a retired chimney construction business owner, won 20 out of his 24 games to win more than any other player - scoring a break of 45 in one frame. He said: "They say it is a good achievement at my age but I just really enjoy playing." Mr Smith, who lives near Kinver with his wife Elaine, first picked up a cue aged 15 when challenged to a game by friends from Dudley Grammar School. Mr Smith played former World Snooker champion Alex Higgins at Kingswinford Conservative Club during an exhibition match when Higgins was in his 20s. He recalled: "It was a good experience to play him."

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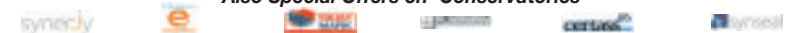
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Commercial Feature

School has a well-earned reputation for excellence

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The school has children aged between three and 11 in classes with a maximum number of 20 allowing for a great deal of individual attention for each child to develop their full potential.

Our high academic standards, commensurate with the ethos and reputation of a school, which has some of the most competitive fees of any independent school in Birmingham, is a real bonus in today's challenging economic climate.

The school also offers a wide range of extra-curricular activities for its pupils ranging from chess club, to football training, ballet to craft.

Children may learn piano, violin, guitar or recorder and are encouraged to participate in local festivals in the classes for music, speech and elocution.

Throughout the year, Norfolk House School offers Extra Tuition classes for pupils aged between six and 11 on Saturdays and on Mondays and Tuesdays throughout the school summer holidays.

Experienced

Small groups of no more than six children are tutored by experienced, qualified staff covering both literacy and numeracy skills as well as preparation for 11+ examinations and grammar school entry.

It is available to pupils from any school around the city.

This year a Summer School is running throughout the school holidays for children currently in Years one to six and is also available to all schools.

Each week has a creative theme and exciting workshops, and activities have been planned for the children. There will be drumming workshops, art and craft, music, science, physical activities, drama and dance all rolled together with bucketfuls of fun. Come along and join in – you won't be disappointed!

Full details can be found on the school website on www.norfolkhouseschool.co.uk or by calling 0121 454 7021.



Year 5 girls enjoying their time in the garden



A pupil learning through play



Spring concert March 2013

Norfolk House School is an independent school for children aged between 3 and 11 years



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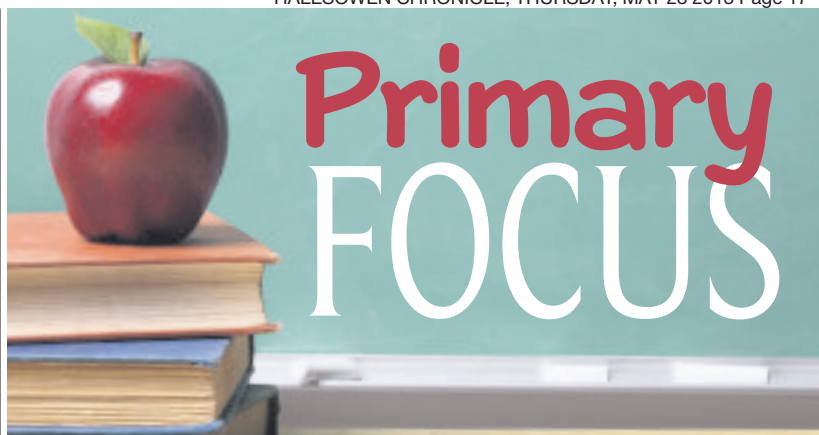
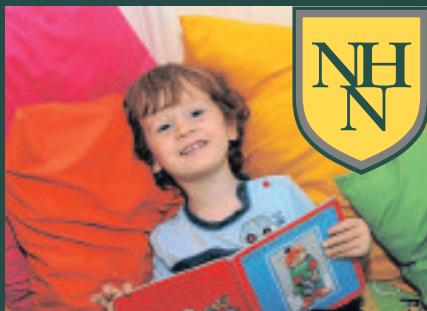
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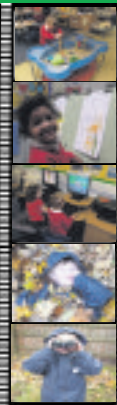
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NEWS

Fewer trams will stop at main station in plan

FEWER trams will visit Wolverhampton's main station and instead be sent to two new stops as part of a £15 million extension of the metro network.

The St George's Terminus in Bilston Street will still be used but transport bosses have said it will only be at certain times of the day.

Instead many of the trams will go to two new stops on Piper's Row and at the city's rail station.

Trams will not be able to visit all three stations due to having to turn at the junction of Bilston Street and Piper's Row.

It comes as a consultation is taking place into the plans to extend the Midland Metro around a third of a mile to link it up with the city's bus station and rail station. Trams will travel down Piper's Row and over the bridge in Railway Drive. Pedestrians will be unable to use Railway Drive and will instead have to use the £1.4m foot bridge installed two years ago.

Funding for the project has not yet been secured but if the government agrees to it work would start in 2015. It will mean two years of roadworks in the city centre.

There are further plans to eventually loop the Metro line around the city centre which would bring the total cost to £30m.

In a leaflet issued as part of a consultation people are being asked what times of the day the tram should stop at St George's rather than at Piper's Row or the rail station.

In it transport authority Centro said: "The proposal is to maintain the St George's Stop."

Cosford lauding women

RAF Museum in Cosford will be celebrating women's achievements in aviation. From May 27 to 31 the museum will be running sessions for families based on some of aviation's most inspirational women. Children will learn about pioneering English aviator Amy Johnson in the museum's Hangar One at 11am and 2pm each day.

Big toddle is launched



Harrison Smith and Finlay Reynolds, from Peters Hill Primary meet Dudley Zoo bird keeper Luke Millar and Kaiser, the African eagle owl

YOUNGSTERS entered a land of make believe at Dudley Zoological Gardens as they launched this year's Big Toddle for children's charity Barnardo's.

Pupils from Peters Hill Primary School Nursery in Amblescote, Stourbridge, got a taste of things to come when they tested out the nursery and fairytale theme for the

toddle, in which under-fives explore Dudley Castle and zoo on June 12 and 13.

They even made some new feathered friends, including African spotted eagle owl Kaiser, as they urged other children to join them in the UK's biggest charity fundraiser for toddlers.

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New manager is taking over at city theatre venue

THE new manager of a Black Country theatre has been announced.

Neil Reading has taken over the post from Kevin O'Sullivan who retired last month after 27 years at the Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton, which is part of the University of Wolverhampton.

The 30-year-old from Gnosall, Staffordshire has spent the past year working as the promoter at the theatre's sister venue, The Performance Hub, on the Walsall campus.

In his new role, as well as overseeing the programming and management of the theatre, Mr Reading will continue to be involved in the development of the Performance Hub.

Before starting work at the hub he worked as the student activities co-ordinator at the university for five years, increasing the numbers of students joining societies and volunteering.

He has also worked for other venues, including The Moat House Hotel Stafford and Rugeley Rose Theatre, and has toured to Battersea Arts Centre, Gatehouse Theatre Stafford and Bedlam Theatre in Edinburgh. He has a performance background, gaining a BA (Hons) in Theatre Studies at University of Hull and an MA in Directing for Theatre at St Mary's College in Twickenham.

Mr Reading founded the Violet Microwave Theatre company in 2000 and has directed all of their shows to date. He was also a founder member of Juice Comedy in Stafford.

Fresh fears on steel jobs

FRESH fears over the future of UK steel jobs were raised today after India's Tata Steel wiped £1 billion from the value of its European operations.

The group, which has UK operations at sites, including Wednesfield, Brierley Hill and Bescot in Walsall, blamed the tough economy in Europe where steel demand has slumped by about a third since the start of the financial crisis.

Unions said the huge writedown will worry its 18,500 staff in the UK who are still reeling from 900 job cuts last year.

In November Tata announced that

sites would close in Cradley, Kingswinford, Wombourne and Dudley, although there would be fresh investment in the Wednesfield Steelpark site.

Around 120 jobs will be lost in the West Midlands when the closures are completed.

Tata, which bought Anglo-Dutch steel giant Corus in 2007 for £6.2bn, has endured a tough time during the downturn as demand from construction and car-making fell, forcing thousands of lay-offs and plant closures.

It employs more than half its 33,000-strong European workforce in the UK.

Tata warned tough conditions are

likely to persist for the 'near and medium-term'.

In February its European business reported a £51 million underlying loss for the three months to the end of 2012, with steel deliveries falling to almost 10 per cent to 3.02 million tonnes.

Paul Talbot, from the Community trade union, said: "These statements are concerning, there's no question about it. They are concerning to the employees who at this moment are still working their way through the last announcement."

The £1.05bn writedown of Tata's assets and goodwill is thought to be one of the largest ever by an Indian company.

Demand for homes up

DEMAND for homes is on the rise in the West Midlands, thanks to the Government's new Help to Buy scheme, claims a new report.

A survey of chartered surveyors carried in April found inquiries from new buyers were at their highest level since last October. The Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors study found 20 per cent more surveyors were reporting demand for property rising rather than falling. That is three per cent higher than the month before and is seen as strongly suggesting that Help to Buy is already attracting interest.

Co-operative sets up to help disabled



Councillor Rachel Harris, Kate Cottam, with back, Tracey McClymont, Hope the dog, Bill Bloomer and Ken McClymont
A CO-OPERATIVE offering financial advice to people with disabilities is poised to be launched in Dudley following strong interest from potential users.

The Dudley Centre for Inclusive Living wants to establish the service after holding meetings about providing a platform where disabled people can support each other. It is believed it could be the first of its kind in the country. The group, with help from consultancy firm Linda Laurie Associates, has held meetings at Stourbridge Fire Station with potential users, officers from Dudley Council and the Department of Work and Pensions.

Associates' senior partner Mike Higgins said: "We were extremely pleased with the response from people in the borough and from supporting bodies like the council."

Chairman of The Dudley Centre for Inclusive Living Ken McClymont said: "This is designed to help disabled people across the borough who maybe facing difficulties dealing with the finance side of things. We believe that by joining up and working together people will be in a better position in their dealings."

JLR enjoying another record breaking run

ANOTHER record-breaking performance from West Midlands luxury car maker Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) has seen it rack up its best ever April sales figures.

JLR sold 28,503 vehicles in April, up 12 per cent on last year.

So far in 2013 it has seen 143,974 of its Jaguar saloons, Range Rovers and Land Rovers driving away from garage forecourts around the world.

Phil Popham, Jaguar Land Rover's director of group sales operations said: "This is a positive start to our second quarter sales and continues the growth trend seen in the first three months of the year. Sales of the Jaguar XF remain buoyant across many of our key markets and we are seeing the positive impact of the all new Range Rover with approaching 15,000 cars sold in the first four months of this year."

The company's growth is behind its decision to double the workforce at its engine factory, under construction on the 154 site on the Wolverhampton and South Staffordshire border. It will employ 1,300 people when the first engines roll off the production line next year.

The company has also been pumping money into its sites at Castle Bromwich and Solihull.

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NEWS

Allegations of electoral fraud reported to police

DOZENS of allegations of electoral fraud were reported to police over the past year, according to new figures.

Police forces in the West Midlands, Staffordshire and West Mercia looked into 31 cases concerning allegations of false statements on election leaflets, false information given on nomination papers and allegations of postal vote fraud.

Watchdog the Electoral Commission now wants to see what can be done to give people more confidence in the security of the democratic process but stressed that it did not believe election fraud was widespread.

Its figures were released a day after a candidate in the local elections in Wolverhampton was given a suspended prison sentence for giving the wrong address on his nomination paper.

Gurcharan Bedi falsely claimed to live at an address in Spring Vale, Wolverhampton, where he was a candidate when he actually lived in Tettenhall.

The commission's figures show there were 19 reports to the police in the West Midlands, 10 in Staffordshire and two in West Mercia. Many of the cases did not need further action.

In Cannock Chase an allegation was made that an election leaflet contained an incorrect statement. In Blakenhall, Wolverhampton it was alleged a family owned two houses in one street and one member had registered to vote at both, but no further action was taken.

Air cadets recruiting day

YOUNGSTERS interested in becoming air cadets can see the opportunities on offer at the Dudley branch's open day. Dudley 347 Squadron is holding the event for potential recruits and their parents on May 28 at 8pm in Dudley TA Centre, Vicar Street. The Air Cadets is for young people between the ages of 13 and 17. Call 01384 243 347 on a Tuesday or Thursday night between 7pm and 9pm or visit, www.347sqn.com.

Cats need to find homes



From left, veterinary staff Steph Lloyd, Emma Adams and Becki Cash with Poppy, Tigger and Penny – three of the cats

YOUNG cats Lilly, Poppy, Penny and Tigger, were found wandering the streets of Cosley in a poor condition, and are now looking for owners who will give them a good home.

The Rosewood Animal Hospital in Cosley is desperate to find homes for the four because the centre is

full. "We need to free up some kennels for our patients, rather than having them filled up with strays," said veterinary nurse Becki Cash, aged 22. Lilly and Poppy, believed to be aged about eight months, were found by Becki and her colleagues, in the animal hospital's reception in Rosewood about

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NEWS

Charity can help more people with cash worries

WITH the tough economic climate continuing to affect families, the Tipton branch of a debt counselling charity is taking on extra staff to help people in need.

The charity, Christians Against Poverty (CAP) which is based at St Matthews Church, has a new debt coach joining the team offering more opportunities for people with out-of-control debts to get advice.

The charity which opened its Tipton base in 2008, has seen a steady rise in the number of people needing help.

Most clients get in touch after personal recommendation. Others are referred by GPs, housing associations and council officers.

Support

Clients' creditors are contacted by CAP, a workable budget is set for the household and the charity continues to give support and encouragement until the client is debt free.

Manager for the Tipton branch, Eileen Reynolds, said: "We're delighted to be welcoming debt coach Rob Whitehouse to the team."

"We have been booked up

by Tom Mason

months in advance as we continue to cope with the fall-out from the economic downturn.

"This will mean we have many more appointments available each week and be able to see and help more people, more quickly."

The charity says that debt problems are rarely caused by overspending alone. The most common reason is a change in circumstances, for example the loss of a job, relationship breakdown, accident or illness.

The charity has 233 church-based debt help centres offering a free service across the UK. It also runs a money course education programme and job clubs.

For more details see www.capdebthelp.org or call 0800 328 0006.

Minister's message on apprenticeships



David Griffin of Stourbridge College, left, MP James Morris, centre, and skills minister Matthew Hancock

DESPITE job losses, there are still opportunities for apprentices in the Black Country, according to the minister for skills and lifelong learning, Matthew Hancock.

Mr Hancock was speaking after opening the Halesowen and Rowley Regis Apprenticeship and Skills Fair.

Dozens of businesses, including Sandwell and Birmingham NHS, Halesowen-based Sandvik Engineering and Jaguar Land Rover, were at the fair promoting 200 apprenticeships to young people who turned up.

Mr Hancock said: "The number of apprenticeships has almost doubled in the Black Country in the last two-and-a-half years. These are difficult economic times but there are opportunities out there."



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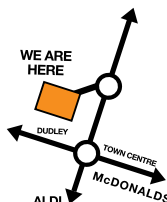
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NEWS

Crews' blitz on potholes sees 4,500 repairs done

MORE than 4,500 potholes in Staffordshire have been repaired in two months since an emergency programme of works was launched.

County council bosses ordered a blitz on winter-damaged highways at the end of February backed by £500,000 to tackle the worst-hit areas.

They now say the end of the work is in sight, with 90 per cent completed.

Filling in will continue throughout the rest of the year with the special repair programme expected to return to normal by the end of this month.

Up to the end of April crews had repaired 4,500 potholes compared to around 2,900 in the same period in 2012 – an increase of 55 per cent.

Twenty crews have been assigned to the task, covering every borough and district area.

Staffordshire County Council leader Philip Atkins said the teams had been highly effective, working flat-out to tackle as many potholes as they could, as quickly as possible.

"The bad winter really did take its toll on our roads which is why we decided to increase investment to help tackle the potholes causing the most problems," he said.

Hundreds of potholes have been repaired on roads across the district including Codsall, Chillington and Brewood. Before the Easter weekend, crews repaired more than 60 potholes in one day alone.

easyJet cuts its losses

BUDGET airline easyJet has announced pre-tax losses of £61 million – down from £112m the previous year. Bosses said they had slashed losses by nearly half in the first half of the year, thanks to strong bookings from customers wanting to flee the recent arctic weather for holidays in the sun. Revenue was up 9.3 per cent to £1.6 billion.

Gwen raises more cash



Gwen Timmins, with a photo of her and husband Bill, on the rheumatology ward at Russells Hall, with manager Karan Matthews, and back, bookings co-ordinator Karen Edwards and Sister Sandra Collins

GWEN Timmins is known as the Queen of Charity – and after her husband died, she decided to raise more money for a good cause in his memory.

Gwen, aged 69, of Crestwood Park, Kingswinford, has been a fundraiser for more than 28 years. In the last decade she has brought in nearly £90,000 for patients at Dudley's Russells Hall Hospital.

Another £500, raised by donations instead of flowers at her husband Bill's funeral, has been presented to the rheumatology ward for a new laundry trolley.

Retired lorry driver Bill died, aged 71, on July 28 last year, just 10 weeks after being diagnosed with lung cancer. Gwen, a former ancillary nurse and factory worker, who was awarded the MBE for services to the community, said: "Besides the special care baby unit, I used to raise money for the pain relief service when it was at Corbett Hospital in Stourbridge."

"Then 10 years ago, when I became an osteo arthritis patient, I started raising money for the pain relief support group, along with another patient, Tony Smith."

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CLUB NEWS

Club told history of chocolate

Insight into hospice work by fundraiser

TRYSULL & SEIDON WI

THE club welcomed chocolatier Jacqueline Smith to its May meeting. She began by telling the group a little of the history of chocolate.

In 1657 the first chocolate house opened in London, but it wasn't until 1847 that Joseph Fry made the cocoa into a paste that could be turned into a chocolate bar.

In 1824 John Cadbury sold tea, coffee and cocoa. He and his brother began manufacturing chocolate drinks and confectionery at the factory in Bourneville.

Jacqui told how the cocoa pods are harvested and cracked open, then the beans are put in leaf lined bins to ferment. They are then left to dry naturally in the sun, or they are roasted.

She said chocolate was very good for our hearts and blood pressure. It is also an antioxidant.

She demonstrated how easy it is to make a simple chocolate lolly and sent round samples of plain, milk and white chocolate. At the end of the talk the ladies were able to buy some of her chocolates and bars.

After refreshments Clare Preece gave the answers to a chocolate quiz she had prepared earlier. Mary Farquharson won the raffle and Clare won the competition for a chocolate cupcake.

At the next meeting on June 13, the competition is a beer tankard and Bob Bibby will take the group on a cake and ale trail.



Fundraiser Jenny Chin was guest speaker at April's meeting, talking about St Giles Hospice

WALSALL CENTRAL EAST TOWNSWOMEN

NEW Chairman Mrs Patricia Jones opened both the April and May meetings by welcoming all the members and visitors, before dealing with the business part of the meetings.

In April she then welcomed speaker Jenny Chin whose subject was 'The Work Of The Hospice'.

Jenny is a fundraiser for St Giles Hospice Walsall and gave a very interesting and informative talk on the work and financing of St Giles.

The May meeting, due to a number of members being on holiday, a Beetle Drive was held. This was a wonderful success, which led to a better fellowship with the newer members who had recently joined from the former Mellish Guild.

A coffee morning was being held in May, with proceeds being donated to St. Giles Hospice.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday June 4 at Walsall Central Methodist Church in the Mellish Room from 7pm. The speaker will be Amanda Green whose talk will be 'Beastalk Literary Charity'.

Members and friends are invited.

Hats off to demonstration

MARYLIN Ottowell was the April demonstrator. Her title was 'Get Ahead, Get a Hat'.

Marylin began with the story of her son in Peru. The arrangement was on a large vase containing mango cala lilies, sunflowers, gerberas, yellow roses, begonia leaves and hypericium berries. Her next arrangement was in a

WALL HEATH FLOWER CLUB

red vase containing Singapore orchids, stocks, red tulips, red roses anthuriums and phlox, this incorporated a red hat.

A beautiful black and white arrangement followed

for 'Graduation' with a mortar board.

Marylin also took members for tea at the Ritz, while the last arrangement was 'The bride' using wax flower, stocks, lilies, yellow roses and orchids.

The June 25 demonstration is by Isobel Liston, entitled 'Powerful Women'.

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What's On! Halesowen

REVIEW

Eddie Izzard, NIA, Birmingham
A MASTER of rambling, absurdist humour, only perhaps Paul Merton can get close to Eddie Izzard when it comes to bizarre flights of fancy.

But the self-proclaimed 'action transvestite' never really seemed to hit top gear in Birmingham on Wednesday night. Maybe it was the venue, the humour evaporating in the cavernous environs of the NIA. It would have hit home at a packed Symphony Hall or Hippodrome rather than a half-empty arena. Turning to watch him on the big screens beside the stage literally became a pain in the neck.

Izzard, looking dapper in a suit with wine-red nail varnish and high heels, did not disappoint as he talked his constantly amusing rubbish for nearly two hours. It seemed like stream of consciousness but must have been structured. Yet the Force Majeure tour's 'God' theme remained vague and pointless, though apparently 'Steve God' sounds like Darth Vader.

There were wonderful surrealist episodes featuring ghost cows, a banjo-playing Kraken and gold-mining bling moles in sports cars, all as disjointed as the Tweets from his fans screened before the show and during the 20-minute interval. His thoughts on dressage 'only useful if you want to park a horse in a cupboard' - were priceless.

Leon Burakowski

Texas make a long overdue return to celebrate 25 years

Glamorous lawyer briefs encounters

STAR of An Evening of Burlesque Bettie Bonbon is not just a pretty face. Bettie, who will be bringing her show to Wolverhampton Grand Theatre tomorrow night (Friday), studied law at university, got a good degree and went on to become an underwriter at Lloyds of London.

However, a few years ago, Bettie decided to concentrate on a career involving figures of a very different nature, becoming a full-time burlesque performer, and she says she has never looked back.

Parody

Now also a teacher at The London Academy of Burlesque, Bettie said: "There are so many misconceptions regarding what a burlesque show is all about."

"It's very tongue in cheek and I think more people are realising that now. Burlesque is the Italian word for parody."

"Burlesque and variety, the two go hand in hand," added Bettie. "So expect the glamour and the girls in the show to be interspersed by equally outrageous speciality acts."

Women regularly outnumber men in auditoriums on An Evening of Burlesque's tour. Contact the box office on 01902 429212.



More than just a pretty face - burlesque artist Bettie Bonbon

IN THEIR 25th anniversary year Texas release a new studio album this week and return in November with a UK tour including a headline show at the Symphony Hall, Birmingham.

Texas's eighth album, The Conversation, is their first in eight years and the latest in a career that has seen the band sell over 30 million albums worldwide. Their multi-platinum albums include White on Blonde, The Hush and a Greatest Hits including such tracks as their 1989 debut I Don't Want A Lover, Say What You Want and In Our Lifetime.

Guitarist

This overdue return features tracks written and produced by founder members of the Glaswegian band singer/guitarist Sharleen Spiteri and bassist Johnny McElhone, alongside collaborations with singer-songwriter Richard Hawley and former Suede guitarist Bernard Butler.

The album was recorded in Glasgow, London and at Richard Hawley's studio in Sheffield for a marriage of Hawley's 50s rock'n'roll frills and the Texas sound.

Texas play the Symphony Hall on November 18. Tickets start from £37. Call 0121 345 0600.



Texas singer Sharleen Spiteri

Join trip to The Planets

EVER wondered what it is like to play in an orchestra? Or conduct The Planets?

Be part of the Philharmonia Orchestra through a free Universe of Sound digital installation of Holst's famous work, allowing you to explore an orchestra using touch screens and planetarium-style projections at Birmingham Municipal Bank at 300 Broad Street from this Saturday to June 16, 11am to 6pm.

REVIEW

Paper Aeroplanes, Glee Club, Birmingham
SARAH Howells provides the distinctively clear voice for the duo Paper Aeroplanes with Richard Llewellyn playing his half of the act with lead guitar, backing vocals and harmonies.

Raven-haired, Howells' piercingly clear voice has a fantastic range, seemingly unlimited power and yet at times manages to keep a childlike quality to it.

Starting out with A Time to Be which was a much louder version that had much more of a rock feel to it than the ethereal acoustic version on their new album Little Letters.

Therein lies a potential problem. It seems the live versions of their tracks on the album promotion tour are much harder and heavier and if you have only heard them from the recording it could be something of a shock when you hear them live.

Also from their new album was At the Altar which was a strong ballad which built up slowly then dropped out for the verses before building back up again for the chorus. For the Same Mistakes Howells allowed the softer side of her voice free rein for this torch song.

The set included mostly tracks from Little Letters with the odd oldie thrown in. For the strong ballad Lifelight, Howells' voice stood out, hitting high and low notes with consummate ease.

Danny Farragher

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CHOICE



Oliver Coleman

Casualty

BBC1, 9.30pm

Making a mistake at work for most of us isn't great, but usually it means a few groans and a slap on the wrist. That's not the case for medical professionals, whose errors can have far-reaching consequences for their patients and their families – as Tom is beginning to realise. But it's his confidence that's taken a real beating following a recent misdiagnosis, and it's going to take a lot of hard work for him to get it back. Meanwhile, in one of the week's most moving storylines, Tess tries to help a young woman with a bleak future.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. 10.00 Saturday Kitchen Live. 11.30 Nigel Slater's Simple Suppers. (R) 12.00 BBC News: Regional News; Weather. 12.15 Bargain Hunt. (R) 1.00 Live Athletics: Great Manchester City Games. 2.30 Helicopter Heroes. (R) 3.15 Escape to the Country. (R) 4.15 A Question of Sport. (R) 4.45 Pointless Celebrities. (R) 5.35 Formula 1: Monaco Grand Prix Qualifying.

6.50 BBC News: Regional News; Weather.

7.10 The Voice UK. Holly Willoughby and Reggie Yates host the final battle show, by the end of which Jessie J, Tom Jones, Danny O'Donoghue and Will.i.am will be one step closer to choosing their acts.

9.20 The National Lottery Draws. Jenni Falconer sets the balls rolling to decide the all-important numbers.

9.30 Casualty. Tom takes the lead when a baby is rushed in with breathing difficulties, and having previously failed to diagnose a youngster's meningitis, he is determined to be thorough.

10.20 BBC News: Weather.

10.40 Michael McIntyre's Comedy Roadshow. The comedian is joined by Kevin Bridges, Daniel Sloss, Milton Jones and Craig Campbell at Glasgow's Theatre Royal; (R) National Lottery Update.

11.25 Film: Eagle Eye. (2008) Two strangers go on the run from the authorities after receiving phone calls warning their lives are in danger. Thriller, with Shia LaBeouf, Michelle Monaghan and Rosario Dawson.

1.15 Weatherwise. 1.20 BBC News.

BBC2

6.00 This Is BBC Two. 6.45 Film: Stage Door. (1937) 8.15 Film: Two Tickets to Broadway. (1951) 10.00 A History of Scotland. (R) 11.00 Map Man. (R) 11.30 Just a Minute. (R) 12.00 The Chef's Protege. (R) 12.30 The Chef's Protege. (R) 1.00 The Chef's Protege. (R) 1.30 The Chef's Protege. (R) 2.00 The Chef's Protege. (R) 2.30 Coast. 3.00 Auction Hero. (R) 4.00 Antiques Road Trip. 5.00 Flog It! (R)

6.00 Golf: PGA Championship. The third day from Wentworth.

7.00 Chelsea Flower Show 2013. Alan Titchmarsh is joined by Joe Swift and Nicki Chapman to observe the traditional mass sell-off, in which crowds jostle for the most sought-after plants and flowers.

8.20 Dad's Army. Mainwaring's men pose as traitors to see how the residents of Walmington-on-Sea would deal with genuine Nazi infiltrators in their midst. (R)

8.50 QI. Stephen Fry is joined by Sandi Toksvig, John Lloyd, Johnny Vegas and regular panelist Alan Davies on the quiz, in which the host asks hypothetical questions. (R)

9.20 David Bowie – Five Years. Exploring five key years in the singer's career, which saw him redefine himself as an artist by adopting different personas – including Ziggy Stardust and the Thin White Duke.

10.50 Film: The Man Who Fell to Earth. (1976) Nicolas Roeg's sci-fi drama, starring David Bowie, Rip Torn, Candy Clark and Buck Henry.

1.05 Film: The Wackness. (2008) 2.40 This Is BBC Two. 5.55 Film: The Mad Miss Manton. (1938)

ITV

6.00 CITV: Special Agent Oso. 6.10 Special Agent Oso. 6.25 The Hive. (R) 6.35 The Hive. (R) 6.40 Dino Dan. (R) 6.55 Dino Dan. (R) 7.05 Animals. (R) 7.15 Animals. (R) 7.20 Almost Naked Animals. (R) 7.35 Ultimate Spider-Man. 8.00 Jessie. 8.25 ITV News. 8.30 Dinner Date. (R) 9.25 The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. (R) 10.15 My Tasty Travels with Lynda Bellingham. (R) 11.15 Saturday Farm. 12.15 ITV News: Weather. 12.25 All Star Mr & Mrs. (R) 1.25 River Monsters. (R) 2.25 The Chase. (R) 3.25 Midsomer Murders. 5.25 Weather. 5.45 ITV News: Weather.

6.00 You've Been Framed! Full Throttle. Harry Hill narrates a selection of comical clips filmed by viewers on their camcorders and mobile phones, featuring thrill-seekers, show-offs and painful-looking accidents. (R)

7.00 Live UEFA Champions League Final. Borussia Dortmund v Bayern Munich (Kick-off 7.45pm). Coverage of the showpiece match at Wembley Stadium, where the Bundesliga clubs contest the prestigious trophy. Subsequent programmes subject to change.

10.15 ITV News: Weather.

10.30 Film: Crank. (2006) An assassin is poisoned and resorts to desperate measures to keep himself alive long enough to exact a fitting revenge. Action thriller, starring Jason Statham, Amy Smart and Jose Pablo Cantillo.

12.10 Jackpot247. Interactive gaming. 3.00 The Starter Wife. (R) 3.45 ITV Nightscreen. Text-based information service.

CHANNEL 4

6.10 The Hoobs. (R) 6.35 The Hoobs. (R) 7.00 British Rallycross. 7.25 The Grid. 8.00 The Morning Line. 9.00 Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) 9.30 Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) 10.00 Frasier. (R) 10.30 Frasier. (R) 11.00 The Big Bang Theory. (R) 11.35 The Big Bang Theory. (R) 12.05 The Simpsons. (R) 12.35 Heston's Fantastic Food. (R) 1.00 Channel 4 Racing. Live coverage from Haydock Park, Goodwood and York. 4.10 Come Dine with Me. (R) 4.40 Come Dine with Me. (R) 5.10 Come Dine with Me. (R) 5.40 Come Dine with Me. (R)

6.15 Come Dine with Me. Stelios Michael hosts the final night in Hastings, East Sussex, hoping to impress his guests with a Greek-inspired evening, before the winner of the £1,000 prize is announced. (R)

6.40 Channel 4 News.

7.00 Film: Titanic. (1997) A society girl falls in love with a penniless artist during the liner's ill-fated voyage. James Cameron's Oscar-winning romantic drama, starring Kate Winslet and Leonardo DiCaprio.

10.40 Film: 48 Hrs. (1982) A hard-bitten cop temporarily releases a fast-talking criminal from prison to help him track down two escaped fugitives. Comedy thriller, starring Nick Nolte, Eddie Murphy, Annette O'Toole and James Remar.

12.30 Dylan Moran Live: Yeah, Yeah. A performance from the comedian's 2011 tour. (R) 1.25 Southland. (R) 2.10 Holyoaks Omnibus. (R) 4.15 Deal or No Deal. High-stakes game show, with Noel Edmonds. (R) 5.10 Countdown. (R) 5.55 SuperScrippers.

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! 10.15 Power Rangers: Super Samurai. (R) 10.45 ThunderCats. (R) 11.15 Inside Hollywood. 11.20 WW1's Tunnels of Death: The Big Dig. (R) 12.20 Film: The Dam Busters. (1954) 2.55 Film: Ben-Hur. (1959)

7.00 Cricket on 5. England v New Zealand. Highlights of day two of the concluding Test in the two-match series, which takes place at Headingley.

8.00 5 News Weekend.

8.05 NCIS. Tony and Ziva trace a suspected terrorist to a warehouse, where they find evidence suggesting a nuclear attack on Washington, DC is being planned. Drama, starring Mark Harmon. (R)

9.00 NCIS. An Iraq war veteran asks Gibbs to investigate the killing of another former marine, who was murdered while working as a lorry driver, so Ziva hits the road to catch the culprit. (R)

9.55 True Crimes: Angel of Death. When the number of deaths in an Indiana intensive care unit rapidly increases, an astute nurse helps a team of detectives to find the culprit. (R)

10.25 Law & Order: Special Victims Unit. An animal rights campaigner is found murdered.

11.20 Law & Order: Criminal Intent. A murderer with multiple personalities is on the loose. Last in the series.

12.15 SuperCasino. 4.00 Michaela's Wild Challenge. (R) 4.50 County Secrets. (R) 5.05 Hana's Helpline. (R) 5.15 Roary the Racing Car. (R) 5.25 The Funky Valley Show. (R) 5.35 Hana's Helpline. (R) 5.50 Roary the Racing Car. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three
7.00 Radio 1's Big Weekend 2013
11.00 The Voice UK
BBC Four
7.00 Swarm: Nature's Incredible Invasions
8.00 British Masters
9.00 Arne Dahl: Many Waters – Part Two
10.30 Ultimate Number 1 at the BBC
11.30 Top of the Pops: 1978

ITV2
4.45 Film: The Incredible Hulk (2008)
7.00 Film: Mamma Mia! (2008). Musical comedy, starring Meryl Streep.
9.10 Film: Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason (2004). Romantic comedy sequel, with Renee Zellweger and Colin Firth.
11.20 Celebrity Juice

ITV3
2.00 Film: Agatha Christie's Murder in Three Acts (1986)
4.00 Northanger Abbey
6.00 Agatha Christie's Marple
8.00 Doc Martin
9.00 Lewis
11.00 Wire in the Blood

ITV4
3.40 20 Years of Champions League
5.40 Mourinho
6.45 Film: Every Which Way But Loose (1978)
Action comedy, starring Clint Eastwood. 9.00 Film: Barb Wire (1996)
Sci-fi thriller, starring Pamela Anderson. 11.00 Premiership Rugby Union

F4
5.30 The Mindy Project
6.00 The Big Bang Theory
7.00 Happy Endings
7.30 How I Met Your Mother
8.30 2 Broke Girls
9.00 Film: Daredevil (2003)
Comic-book adventure, starring Ben Affleck. 11.05 The Big Bang Theory

Film4
3.00 The 7th Voyage of Sinbad (1958)
4.45 Home Alone 3 (1997)
6.40 Mission: Impossible 2 (2000)
Action thriller sequel, starring Tom Cruise. 9.00 Forrest Gump (1994)
Comedy drama, starring Tom Hanks. 11.40 The Crazies (2010)

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SUNDAY'S TV 26.05.13

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CHOICE



Colin O'Donoghue

Once Upon a Time
Channel 5, 8pm

For almost half a century Barbara Hershey has been one of the most dynamic actresses working in Hollywood. She's also rather good in this saga from the Disney stable. In the latest offering, Cora (Hershey) sends her zombies to abduct Aurora (Sarah Bolger) and swap her for the enchanted compass the sorceress needs to travel to Storybrooke. Elsewhere, Snow takes the sleeping powder in the hope of warning the local residents of the danger, and Captain Hook (Colin O'Donoghue) appears to be playing a game of his own.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** The Battle of the Atlantic: Remembered. **12.00** The Big Questions: Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.05** Countryfile. (R) **2.00** Regional Programme. **2.30** Bargain Hunt. (R) **3.15** Points of View. **3.30** Escape to the Country. (R) **4.30** Songs of Praise. **5.05** Chelsea Flower Show 2013. **5.35** Formula 1: Monaco Grand Prix - Highlights.

7.05 BBC News; Regional News; Weather.

7.30 Countryfile. East Yorkshire is this week's location as Matt Baker finds out about marsh management on the Humber estuary and Julia Bradbury visits the Leconfield MOD School for Transport. Including Weather for the Week Ahead.

8.30 Case Histories. Jackson is asked to find out if a woman's fiancé is cheating on her - only to find himself investigating a suspected murder. Marlee moves in and Deborah turns to honey-trapping.

10.00 BBC News; Regional News; Weather.

10.25 My Hero: Hugh Dennis on Ronnie Barker. Outnumbered star Hugh Dennis pays an affectionate tribute to Ronnie Barker - the star of Porridge and The Two Ronnies - following his career from the London stage to TV.

11.25 Film: The Lake House. (2006) Two strangers who exchange letters fall in love - but discover they are existing two years apart. Romantic fantasy, starring Sandra Bullock, Keanu Reeves and Christopher Plummer.

1.00 Weatherview. **1.05** BBC News.

BBC2

7.15 The A to Z of TV Gardening. **8.00** The Beechgrove Garden. **8.30** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **10.00** Live Athletics: Great Manchester Run. **12.35** EastEnders. (R) **2.25** Live Women's FA Cup Final. **5.15** Flop IT! (R)

6.00 Golf: PGA Championship. Day four from Wentworth. **7.00** Racing Legends: Stirling Moss. Actor Patrick Stewart and former racing driver Stirling Moss travel to Florence in a classic Mercedes to retrace the route of Italy's most famous road race - the Mille Miglia. (R)

8.00 Porridge. Fletcher helps cellmate Godber make it through the night, calling on his limitless imagination to while away the hours. Comedy, starring Ronnie Barker and Richard Beckinsale. (R)

8.30 Ice Age Giants. Alice Roberts discovers evidence of a conflict between a cave bear and a lion in Transylvania, and examines the well-preserved remains of a female woolly rhinoceros in Siberia.

9.30 Australia with Simon Reeve. The author and adventurer continues his Australian journey with visits to Kakadu National Park, the remote northern Bush, Cape York Peninsula and the Great Barrier Reef.

10.30 Film: Cinderella Man. (2005) A washed-up boxer struggling to support his family during the Great Depression tries to launch a comeback. Drama, with Russell Crowe.

12.45 Sign Zone: Countryfile. (R) **1.40** Holby City. (R) **2.40** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Special Agent Oso. **6.10** Special Agent Oso. **6.25** The Hive. (R) **6.35** The Hive. (R) **6.40** Dino Dan. (R) **6.55** Dino Dan. (R) **7.05** Animals. (R) **7.15** Animals. (R) **7.20** Almost Naked Animals. (R) **7.30** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. **8.00** Sonny with a Chance. **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Country House Sunday. **9.25** The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. (R) **10.20** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **11.20** ITV News. **11.30** Live French Open Tennis.

6.30 Regional Programme; Weather.

6.45 ITV News; Weather.

7.00 Celebrity Catchphrase. Kym Lomas, Steve Pemberton and Rosemary Shrager compete to identify familiar phrases hidden in animated clips to win thousands of pounds for charity.

8.00 Britain's Got Talent. Ant and Dec present the final round of auditions.

9.00 Coronation Street. Stella and Karl rejoin the Rovers.

9.30 The Scapengoat. A man is persuaded to swap places with his perfect double and finds himself drawn into a new life, with disastrous consequences. Daphne du Maurier adaptation, starring Matthew Rhys. Concludes after the news. (R)

10.35 ITV News; Weather.

10.50 The Scapengoat. Conclusion of the Daphne du Maurier adaptation, starring Matthew Rhys. (R)

11.45 Premiership Rugby Union. Northampton Saints v Leicester Tigers.

12.45 The Store. **2.15** Monk. (R) **3.00** Motorsport UK. **3.50** ITV Nightscreen. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.10 The Hoobs. (R) **6.35** The Hoobs. (R) **7.00** Xtreme Storm. **7.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.55** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.25** Frasier. (R) **8.55** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **1.00** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **1.30** The Simpsons. (R) **2.00** The Simpsons. (R) **2.30** Deal or No Deal. **3.30** Film: Volcano. (1997) Disaster thriller starring Tommy Lee Jones. **5.30** Film: Tooth Fairy. (2010) Premiere. Family comedy, starring Dwayne Johnson.

7.30 Channel 4 News.

8.00 Clare Balding's Secrets of a Suffragette. The presenter investigates the death of militant activist Emily Wilding Davison in the 1913 Epsom Derby and offers a fresh perspective on what really happened that day.

9.00 Film: Another Year. (2010) Premiere. A couple approaching retirement are visited by friends and family less happy with their lives. Mike Leigh's comedy drama, starring Lesley Manville and Jim Broadbent.

11.30 Film: The Cider House Rules. (1999) A doctor's assistant living in the orphanage where he grew up sets out to see more of life, but faces difficult moral decisions. Drama, starring Tobey Maguire and Michael Caine.

1.40 Film: Murder Ahoy. (1964) Mystery, starring Margaret Rutherford. **3.20** Come Dine with Me. Four amateur chefs compete in north-west London. (R) **4.15** Deal or No Deal. Beat-the-banker game show. (R) **5.10** Countdown. With guest Jo Brand. (R) **5.55** SuperScrippers.

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Peppa Pig. **6.05** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **6.15** Fifi and the Flowerpots. (R) **6.25** Bert and Ernie's Great Adventures. (R) **6.30** The Mr Men Show. (R) **6.45** Chloe's Closet. **6.55** Roobarb and Custard Too. (R) **7.00** Bananas in Pyjamas. (R) **7.15** Animal Antics. (R) **7.20** Noddy in Toyland. (R) **7.35** Mio Mao. (R) **7.40** City of Friends. (R) **7.50** Hana's Helpline. (R) **8.00** Little Princess. (R) **8.15** The Adventures of Bottle Top Bill and His Best Friend Corky. (R) **8.25** Angelina Ballerina. (R) **8.45** Rupert Bear. (R) **9.00** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.15** Toby's Travelling Circus. (R) **9.30** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **9.45** Jelly Jamm. (R) **10.00** Power Rangers: Super Samurai. (R) **10.35** ThunderCats. (R) **11.05** How Do They Do It? (R) **11.35** The Hotel Inspector. (R) **12.30** The Hotel Inspector. (R) **1.30** Film: Cats & Dogs. (2001) **3.10** Film: Winnie the Pooh. (2011) **4.00** Film: Scooby-Doo. (2002)

6.00 World's Craziest Weddings. Incidents and stunts that made people's special days even more memorable. (R)

6.55 5 News Weekend.

7.00 Cricket on 5. England v New Zealand.

8.00 Once Upon a Time. Cora sends her zombies to abduct Aurora.

9.00 Film: Drag Me to Hell. (2009) Premiere. Horror, starring Alison Lohman.

11.05 Film: My Soul to Take. (2010) Premiere. Horror, starring Max Thieriot.

1.15 SuperCasino. **4.00** Michaela's Wild Challenge. (R) **4.50** County Secrets. (R) **5.05** Hana's Helpline. (R) **5.15** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **5.25** The Funky Valley Show. (R) **5.35** Hana's Helpline. (R) **5.50** Roary the Racing Car. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three
7.00 Radio 1's Big Weekend 2013
11.00 Russell Howard's Good News Extra
11.45 Sweat the Small Stuff: Extra Sweaty

BBC Four
7.00 The Dark Ages: An Age of Light
8.00 The Somme: Secret Tunnel Wars
9.00 Nina Conti: Talk to the Hand
10.05 Timeshift: Wrestling's Golden Age: Grapples, Grunts and Grannies
11.05 Arena: Sonny Rollins '74 - Rescued!

ITV2
3.45 You've Been Framed! **4.15** Film: The Mummy (1999) **6.40** Film: Back to the Future Part III (1990) Sci-fi comedy sequel, starring Michael J Fox. **9.00** Britain's Got More Talent **10.00** Film: The Bourne Supremacy (2004) Action thriller sequel, starring Matt Damon.

ITV3
8.00 Vera. DCI Stanhope investigates a murder at a remote cottage in Northumberland. **10.00** Prime Suspect

ITV4
2.45 Live Indian Premier League Cricket. Coverage of the final at Eden Gardens, Kolkata. **8.00** Premiership Rugby Union **9.00** Film: Kill the Conqueror (1997) **11.00** French Open Tennis Highlights

E4
4.35 Revenge **5.30** The Mindy Project **6.00** The Big Bang Theory **7.30** New Girl **8.00** Film: X-Men (2000) **10.00** Rude Tube 2012
Film4
3.05 Honey, I Blew Up the Kid (1992) **4.50** New in Town (2009) **6.40** Green Zone Interview Special **6.50** Crocodile Dundee II (1988) **9.00** Knowing (2009) Mystery thriller, starring Nicolas Cage and Rose Byrne. **11.20** Festen (1998)

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The shop also caters for parties and offers a local delivery service for bookings made by clubs and organisations including residential care homes. All enquires are quoted individually depending on the requirements.

The consumption of take-away meals has steadily increased since the recession bit as more of us choose to "Dine-In" instead of "Dining Out". So treat yourself and enjoy the delights on offer at the Kent Road Fish Bar - at your service 7 days a week.



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Recently opened Sue's Sweets is certainly hitting the spot for those with a sweet tooth!

Owner Sue, (a self confessed chocaholic), saw a gap in the market as more and more sweet shops closed following stiff competition from the major supermarkets.

It is 60 years ago this year since sugar rationing ended and the British love affair with sweet confectionery began in earnest. It is estimated that we spend £413 million pounds a year on treats and spend on average £1.52 a day to satisfy our cravings.

The shop in Kent Road, Halesowen has a vast selection of sweets and chocolate available, loose, bagged-up or the traditional Pick 'n' Mix (making a big comeback since the demise of Woolworths!). Sue previously had a shop in Halesowen Town Centre and has been retailing sweets for over 14 years.

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Saturday 10.00am-7.00pm
Sunday 12.00 noon-5.00pm



What's On!

Film Choices

MONDAY

Romancing the Stone, Channel 4, 1.05pm

A romantic novelist goes in search of her kidnapped sister in the steamy jungles of South America, only to become the target of a villainous general who demands as a ransom the valuable treasure map in her possession. Help is at hand in the form of a craggy daredevil fortune hunter. Michael Douglas stars. (1994)

Cool Runnings, BBC1, 1.55pm

A sprinter fails to qualify for the Jamaican Olympic squad, but refuses to give up his dream. Learning that a former US bobsleigh coach is living nearby, he seizes the chance to shine in an entirely different sport, and cajoles three of his friends to join him in training for the 1988 Winter Olympics in the far less tropical environment of Canada. Fact-based comedy, with John Candy. (1993)

TUESDAY

Desperado, Channel 5, 10.50pm

A mysterious musician carrying a guitar case full of firearms turns up in a small backwoods town to exact revenge on the drugs baron who killed his girlfriend and permanently injured his hand. Robert Rodriguez's action thriller, starring Antonio Banderas, Salma Hayek, Cheech Marin, Joaquim de Almeida, Steve Buscemi and Quentin Tarantino. (1995)



Cool Runnings, Monday, BBC1, 1.55pm

WEDNESDAY

Resident Evil: Extinction, Channel 5, 10pm

Zombie-fighting heroine Alice comes out of hiding to protect a group of refugees in a post-apocalyptic wasteland overrun by the walking dead. Meanwhile, the sinister corporation that created the zombie virus is about to embark on its most dangerous experiment yet. Sci-fi thriller sequel, starring Milla Jovovich. (2007)

THURSDAY

Bad Boys, Channel 5, 9pm

Detectives Mike Lowrey and Marcus Burnett search for a \$100million heroin consignment brazenly stolen by a French drug kingpin from the police evidence room. However, after a mix-up over a phone call from a potential witness, each cop has to assume the other's identity. Thriller, starring Will Smith. (1995)

FRIDAY

Death Race, Channel 5, 9pm

Jensen Ames is framed for the murder of his wife and sent to Terminal Island Prison, a facility that broadcasts the highly profitable Death Race, a high-octane event where convicts battle to the death in customised cars. When a popular driver dies, crooked prison warden Hennessey persuades Ames to take his place, claiming he will be released if he is victorious. Jason Statham stars. (2008)

Pick of the Week

David proves he still has what it takes

He's the Starman, a real Space Oddity and one of our Heroes. He's also known as David Robert Jones, the Brixton boy who grew up to be one of the most influential music artists of all time.

Of course, we all know him best as David Bowie, a change of moniker forced on him by the fact that in the early days of his career, Davy Jones was making a name for himself as a member of The Monkees.

Even if you're not a fan of his music, you've got to admire the way in which Bowie has continually managed to reinvent himself, and not so much moved with the times, as stayed ahead of them.

For years he kept out of the spotlight, then surprised everybody by announcing the release of The Next Day, his first studio album for 10 years, on his 66th birthday.

He's kept quiet about it ever since, apart from revealing he will never do another interview, preferring instead to let the music do the talking; if anything, his silence has also

helped to generate interest in him and his work.

The Next Day has been a massive success, with the public intrigued by what he might have been up to during his absence. And while it's a good album, even the most ardent Bowie fan would probably admit that it isn't as impressive as the offerings he gave the world during his most productive period, which lasted through the 1970s to the early 1980s.

This period continues to be seen as the most important of his career to date, and five separate years of that time were looked at in-depth in this new documentary.

Its makers have decided that 1971, 1975, 1977, 1980 and 1983 are when Bowie was at the peak of his powers, and it's hard to disagree with them.

The programme will look at Ziggy Stardust, the decision to adopt a soul sound for Young Americans, his Thin White Duke persona, time in Berlin, and the later Scary Monsters (and Super Creeps), and Let's Dance albums.

We're promised previously unseen archive footage and interviews with collaborators too.

"David Bowie is one of the most important international music stars of the past 50 years," says Jan Younghusband, the BBC's Commissioning Editor, Music & Events. "His impact on the music industry around the globe is exceptional. The never-before-seen footage in this programme will provide a fascinating insight into the world of this very private person."

Francis Whately, director, adds: "This is a project that has been in development for more than a decade, in fact since Bowie and I worked together in 2001 on a film for the BBC Omnibus strand. This year, 2013, is shaping up to be the year of David Bowie, and now is the perfect moment for this feature-length film devoted to this extraordinary artist."

Extraordinary indeed. Fifty years after he recorded his first demo, and after so many ch-ch-ch-changes to his image, Bowie is, as his song Fame states, too cool to fool.



David Bowie – Five Years, Saturday, BBC2, 9.20pm

Best of the Rest

MONDAY

Britain's Got Talent, ITV, 7.30pm

Every year this series shines the spotlight on some hilarious acts, and impressionist Philip Green is one of them. The 21-year-old comedian got a unanimous four yeses to take him through to the semi-finals. Of course it's anyone's guess who will have made it through to this stage of the finals, but as we all know, you don't need to win BGT to land a career, as Susan Boyle proved a few years ago. What we can tell you is that Ant and Dec will be in their best attire as judges. Simon Cowell, Amanda Holden, Alesha Dixon and David Walliams give their verdict on the night's returning acts.

The Queen: A Passion for Horses, BBC1, 9pm

It's no secret that the Queen loves horses. She's been photographed and filmed at numerous events over the years, and even has her own racehorses. But just how hands-on is she when it comes to her equine friends? The BBC has found the perfect person to find that out – national treasure Clare Balding, whose grandfather, father and brother have all trained the Queen's horses, which gives her a unique insight into Her Majesty's stable. This documentary charts the course of one spring season, from the births of foals at Sandringham to the thrill of race day at Newbury. Princess Anne and Zara Phillips, who are following in her footsteps (or should that be hoofsteps?), also discuss their esteemed relative's dedication to her four-legged friends.

TUESDAY

The Apprentice, BBC1, 9pm

Our economy might be struggling following a series of recessions, however one rule of business is thus: go where the money is. That's exactly what the candidates do this week, as they're bundled onto an early morning plane for a business trip to Dubai. It's in the oil-rich Emirate city that this series' scavenger hunt takes place, as the teams are challenged to track down items for a hotel. While one team hopes to capitalise on a bit of local expertise by scouring the markets, another heads straight to a shopping centre.

WEDNESDAY

The Iraq War, BBC2, 9pm

Without doubt the most contentious decisions made by Tony Blair and George W Bush during their time in office were in regard to the war in Iraq. For the first time, key decision-makers on both sides of the conflict, including Tony Blair and members of Saddam's regime discuss their roles... and their regrets. The first of three episodes concentrates on the build-up to the war, as the politicians involved recall the circumstances that made conflict inevitable, and attempt to refute some of the myths and speculation that have come to surround a war that is doomed to be forever shrouded in controversy.

Frankie

BBC1, 9pm

Frankie is determined to get her life in order, beginning with her home. She gives it a fresh lick of paint, changes the locks and throws away the last of Ian's stuff. However, just when one section of her life appears to be nearing some form of normality, her work life hits a crisis as the circumstances of Liana Corden's death begin to be investigated meaning she needs her team's support more than ever, but this doesn't materialise from Dr Evans who continues to try and bring her down, using another patient as ammunition.

THURSDAY

Die Hard: The True Story, Channel 5, 7pm

In 1988, action thriller Die Hard became one of the biggest hits of the year. It helped transform Bruce Willis from charming TV regular into an A-list movie star, and created a template which has been slavishly adhered to ever since in films such as Under Siege, and more recently, the dreadful White House-centric Olympus Has Fallen. It spawned four sequels, including the hi-tech, rather enjoyable Die Hard 4.0, which saw John McClane joining forces

with a technological whiz-kid who tackled a warped IT expert trying to bring down America's computer systems. This show examines how likely large-scale cyber terrorism is.

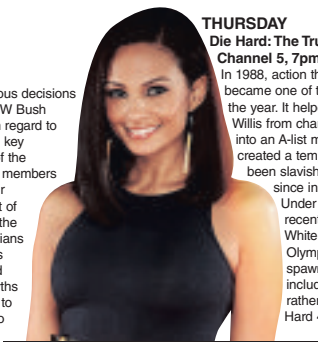
Britain's Stone Age Tsunami, Channel 4, 8pm

It might upset some to know this, but 8000 years ago Britain was literally attached to the continent by a land mass the size of Germany. In 6000BC Doggerland was washed into the sea by a raging tsunami. What remains is a shallow area of the North Sea now known as Dogger Bank. Using modern digital technology, Tony Robinson and a team of archaeologists are able to take a virtual journey through this vanished landscape.

FRIDAY

Sarah Millican: Thoroughly Modern Millican Live, Channel 4, 9pm

Sarah Millican left many critics rolling in the aisles when she seized victory at the Edinburgh Fringe a few years ago. She soon gave Micky Flanagan a run for his money as one of UK TV's most ubiquitous guests, so there was little surprise when Bebb bosses finally gave Ms M her own show. If you shelled out a tenner or more for the DVD of her stand-up performance at London's Hammersmith Apollo during her 2012 UK tour, then you may want to give this free version a wide berth. Everyone else: settle back and enjoy as the omnipresent funnywoman reflects on the wonders of making a home-made treadmill, the reasons for carrying spare pants and the practicalities of an orgy.



Britain's Got Talent, Monday, ITV, 7.30pm



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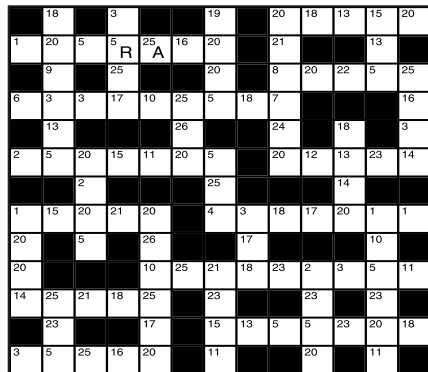
Puzzler

Brain Gym

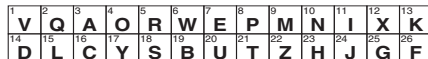
No.222

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:



Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

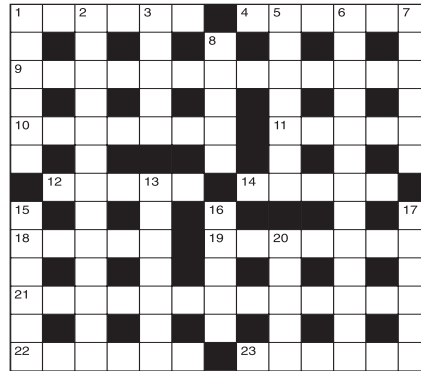
Cryptic Clues:

Across

1. Make an impression? (6)
4. He knows where to draw the line (6)
9. With which one suffers a lack of balance (4,9)
10. Take action to stop weakening the spirit? (3,4)
11. Make a change in special terms (5)
12. Soundly ridiculed a conductor (5)
14. Belief one can always go back on? (5)
18. Bring up the question of more pay? (5)
19. Hoping to benefit from a reduction in the fare (2,1,4)
21. As a matador may be? (7,2,4)
22. An odd desire to live (6)
23. His parents will be late (6)

Down

1. Do some relief work? (6)
2. Suspicious affair the comedian is involved in? (5,8)
3. Fate embraced by small church cleric (5)
5. A sign of confusion (3,4)
6. At home finally, seeking a place (2,2,3,6)
7. Private coaches? (6)
8. Period of youth which may be tense (5)
13. In line with the drill sergeant's instructions (7)
15. He wants a good deal (6)
16. Tied up money? (5)
17. Taken unawares? (6)
20. The morning belongs to us for an intrigue (5)



Quick Clues:

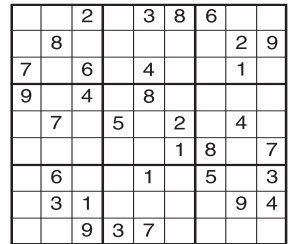
Across

1. Mend (6)
4. Mission (6)
9. In order of time (13)
10. Ruler (7)
11. Extremity (5)
12. Range (5)
14. Brush (5)
18. Suffer (5)
19. Glowing (7)
21. Articulation (13)
22. Hark! (6)
23. Drive home (6)

Down

1. Affluence (6)
2. Clear-sighted (13)
3. Interior (5)
5. Normal (7)
6. Lodgings (13)
7. Water down (6)
8. Kudos (5)
13. Scent (7)
15. Scatter (6)
16. Pamphlet (5)
17. Offensive odour (6)
20. Slow speech (5)

Sudoku



Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

5	3	8	9	7	2	1	4	6
2	4	9	6	3	1	5	7	8
1	7	6	4	8	5	2	3	9
6	8	4	5	2	9	7	1	3
7	9	5	3	1	4	6	8	2
3	2	1	7	6	8	4	9	5
8	5	7	2	4	3	9	6	1
4	1	2	8	9	6	3	5	7
9	6	3	1	5	7	8	2	4

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS: CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Floodlit game; 7 Steep; 8 Noose; 9 Tea; 10 Turquoise; 11 Exempt; 12 In debt; 15 Two-seater; 17 Hie; 18 Rotor; 19 Heels; 21 Poltergeists. Down: 1 From the start; 2 Die; 3 Import; 4 Gun-runner; 5 Maori; 6 Nevertheless; 7 Spare; 10 Top secret; 13 Ethos; 14 Etcher; 16 Outdo; 20 Eve. QUICK - Across: 1 Reminiscence; 7 Drear; 8 Incur; 9 Eve; 10 Sacrilege; 11 Assent; 12 Tariff; 15 Elucidate; 17 Ash; 18 Rouse; 19 Abuse; 21 Clothes-horse. Down: 1 Rio-de-Janeiro; 2 Neer; 3 Strict; 4 Eliminate; 5 Cache; 6 Free of charge; 7 Drags; 10 Sentiment; 13 Inane; 14 Vacate; 16 Usual; 20 Ugh.

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 **Property**

Five bedrooms in detached home



The house in Lloyd Hill is on the market for offers based on £450,000. Call Berriman Eaton on 01902 326 366



One of the three bathrooms in the house



The spacious open-plan kitchen is fully equipped

A FIVE-bedroom individually designed detached property near Lower Penn, Wolverhampton is for sale priced at £450,000.

The house in Lloyd Hill has an impressive open-plan, live-in kitchen

with oak style flooring leading into the fitted kitchen area and patio doors from the dining area to the rear garden. There is a lounge with fire surround, guest WC, through hall, separate utility, integral garage, a magnificent master bedroom suite with fitted dressing room and en suite, together with four further bedrooms and three bathrooms.

Lloyd Hill is on the South Staffordshire border, some four miles from the city centre with local shops, choice of schools nearby and good public transport services.

Visit www.berrimaneaton.co.uk for further details or call 01902 326366 to view.

Immaculate house is on market at £90,000



The property is on the market with agent Paul Dubberley

THIS immaculate three bedroom mid-terrace home in Cobham Road, Wednesbury, is for sale with an asking price of £90,000.

The property benefits from gas central heating and double glazing as specified, with accommodation briefly



The home is immaculate says the estate agent

comprising lounge, ground floor bathroom/WC, reception hall, fitted kitchen and three bedrooms. Outside there is parking to the front and an enclosed rear garden.

Call estate agent Paul Dubberley on 0121 505 3533 for more details.

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HALESOWEN, BROMSGROVE ROAD

Located in the desirable location of Romsley. This unfurnished semi detached house features gas central heating, modern and spacious lounge, fitted kitchen, conservatory, 3 bedrooms, bathroom with shower, front & rear gardens, garage, fantastic views, inspection strongly recommended. EPC: E

£875 PCM



HALESOWEN, HOWLEY GRANGE ROAD

A large and unfurnished semi detached house in a well sought after location, close to local primary school and ideal for access to Birmingham. Featuring gas central heating, 2 living rooms, fitted kitchen, 3 bedrooms, bathroom with shower, small rear garden, driveway parking. EPC: E

£625 PCM



STOURBRIDGE, WHEELER STREET

A traditional 3 bedroom mid terraced property in the highly sought after Old Quarter of Stourbridge. Featuring front reception room with original marble fireplace, rear reception room, fitted kitchen, downstairs bathroom with shower, 2 large bedrooms and 1 large single. Lovely rear garden, gas central heating, double glazing. On road parking. Available 20/06/13. EPC: D

£595 PCM



OLDBURY, ST MATTHEWS ROAD

Refurbished to a high standard. This 3 bedroom mid-terrace property in Oldbury/Quinton area has lounge, fitted kitchen, blow air central heating, white bathroom suite with shower, separate wc, rear garden with parking. Available immediately. EPC: D

£575 PCM



HALESOWEN, TREGARRON ROAD

Ideally situated for local shops and buses to Halesowen, Stourbridge and Cradley Heath. A well presented semi-detached house featuring a large lounge, modern kitchen, 3 good sized bedrooms, house bathroom with shower, new double glazing, gas central heating, driveway and garage parking, front and rear gardens. EPC: D

£575 PCM



HALESOWEN, BEAUMONT ROAD

Superb fully re-furnished traditional semi-detached house available end of April. 2 reception rooms, fitted kitchen, downstairs bathroom with shower, 2 double bedrooms, gas central heating, double glazed. A must see property! EPC: E

£550 PCM



HALESOWEN, THE INFIELDS

Stunning and modern apartment on a well sought after new estate. This ground floor apartment features 2 bedrooms, large lounge with superb kitchen with appliances, bathroom with shower, gas central heating, double glazing, allocated parking. Available immediately. Not to be missed! EPC: C

£550 PCM



HALESOWEN, CAVALIER DRIVE

This beautifully presented and well looked after furnished first floor apartment is centrally located to Halesowen, within easy reach of the town centre and local bus station featuring 2 bedrooms, large lounge with access to your own balcony, fitted kitchen, bathroom with shower, electric heating, double glazing, allocated parking space for one car. A must see property. EPC: C

£550 PCM



OLDBURY, KINGSWAY

A lovely modern top floor apartment which features 2 double bedrooms, master with en-suite, electric storage heating, house bathroom but no shower, loft access, allocated parking, close to main bus route into Halesowen and Birmingham City Centre. EPC: C

£525 PCM



CRADLEY HEATH, TIMBERTREE CRESCENT

Located within easy reach of Timbertree School. This semi detached house has been fully refurbished to a high standard and features 2 reception rooms, fitted kitchen diner, 2 double bedrooms, bathroom with shower, front and rear gardens, rear garden having outbuildings. On road parking. Available 7th June. Not to be missed! EPC: C

£525 PCM



HALESOWEN, COLLEY LANE

Wonderfully presented and modern. A mid-terrace house on a popular road which is close to Colley Gate Primary School and local shops. Featuring 2 double bedrooms, large dining kitchen, modern lounge, house bathroom with shower, downstairs WC, tiered garden, on road parking. Available 7th June. Not to be missed! EPC: C

£525 PCM



HALESOWEN, ADAMS COURT

Conveniently located for local shops and buses to Halesowen and Stourbridge. A large and spacious ground floor apartment featuring modern decor and fixtures and benefiting from gas central heating, spacious living room, fitted kitchen with white goods, 2 double bedrooms, bathroom with separate shower cubicle and allocated parking space. EPC: C

£525 PCM



BARTLEY GREEN, LUDFORD ROAD

Located in the woodgate area, ideal for the local primary school, this newly decorated 3 bedroom semi detached house features: fitted kitchen, large lounge, house bathroom with shower, driveway parking, mature rear garden. EPC: D

£525 PCM



HALESOWEN, ROUNDHILL TERRACE

Located in the popular area of Hurst Green. A lovely unfurnished mid terraced house which features a modern fitted dining kitchen, 2 good size bedrooms, modern lounge, gas central heating, double glazing, on road parking, large rear garden. EPC: E

£495 PCM



STOURBRIDGE, BAGLEY STREET

Deceptively large and within walking distance to Stourbridge town centre. This lovely semi-detached house features a great lounge, large dining kitchen with gas oven and hob, 2 double bedrooms, house bathroom with shower, nice sized rear garden, on road parking, double glazing, gas central heating available now. EPC: TBC

£485 PCM



HALESOWEN, HIGHFIELD ROAD

Deceptively large semi-detached house, close to local shops and buses to Halesowen, Stourbridge and Cradley Heath. Featuring 2 good sized lounges, fitted kitchen, downstairs bathroom with shower, 2 double bedrooms, nice size rear garden, on road parking. Available mid June 2013. EPC: TBC

£475 PCM



HALESOWEN, CLEINT HOUSE

Stunning views from this top floor apartment. Located within walking distance to Halesowen, this apartment features 2 double bedrooms, a light and airy lounge, house bathroom with shower, fitted kitchen with a small fridge, warm air heating, double glazing, available now. EPC: D

£475 PCM



DUDLEY, ANCHOR DRIVE

Modern and comfortable living. This 2nd floor apartment is set in a quiet location, with easy access to Dudley, Tipton, Wednesbury and the M5. The property features 2 double bedrooms, modern fitted kitchen with integrated electric oven and hob, white bathroom suite with shower, spacious lounge with patio doors opening to a Juliet balcony, electric heating, double glazing, allocated parking space. EPC: C

£475 PCM



HALESOWEN, HAMILTON AVENUE

Located on the ever so popular estate of the Abbey Fields. This unfurnished first floor apartment features 1 double bedroom, modern kitchen, light and airy lounge, house bathroom with shower, own rear garden, garage. EPC: E

£425 PCM



NETHERTON, ST GEORGES ROAD

Spacious and quiet. A totally refurbished 1st floor apartment featuring electric storage heating, living room, fitted kitchen with a fridge freezer, 1 double bedroom with fitted wardrobes, house bathroom with shower, rear garden, parking space. EPC: D

£395 PCM



NETHERTON, BAPTIST END ROAD

An unfurnished 1st floor flat comprising: living room, fitted kitchen, 1 double bedroom, bathroom with shower, electric storage heating, double glazing, parking space to rear, communal garden. EPC: D

£395 PCM



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EPC E

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EPC F

£200,000

An extended traditional semi detached house comprising lounge, extended kitchen/breakfast room and three bedrooms.

Slater Close, Cradley Heath



EPC C

£139,995

Modern detached house comprising WC, lounge, kitchen/diner, conservatory, three bedrooms, en-suite to master bedroom and family bathroom.

Graingers Lane, Cradley Heath



EPC F

Guide £125,000 -£150,000

This individual property offers a variety of accommodation comprising a shop on the front, garage and carport.



£325,000

A traditional semi detached house comprising lounge, study, lounge/diner, conservatory and master bedroom with en-suite.

Severn Rise, Rowley Regis



EPC C

£100,000

A modern ground floor apartment with accommodation comprising lounge, kitchen, two bedrooms, en-suite and parking.

Western Road, Cradley Heath



EPC D

Offers Over£100,000

Well presented three bedroom property offering porch, lounge, kitchen, utility, WC, conservatory, shower room, gated drive and rear garden.

New Pool Road, Cradley Heath



EPC D

£90,000

An end terraced property comprising porch, WC, lounge, kitchen/diner, three bedrooms, family bathroom, rear garden and driveway.

Winnall Close, Bilston



EPC E

Offers Over£160,000

Three bedroom property briefly comprising lounge/diner, downstairs WC, front and rear gardens, driveway and garage

Castle Road, Tipton



EPC F

Offers Over£120,000

Detached three bedroom property benefitting from entrance hall, living room, dining room, rear garden and driveway.

St. Marks Road, Dudley



Awaiting EPC

Offers Over£120,000

Semi detached three bedroom property briefly comprising entrance hall, lounge, kitchen/diner, family bathroom, rear garden and driveway.

Bankfield Road, Tipton



EPC F

£110,000

Semi detached three bedroom property briefly comprising entrance hall, lounge/diner, kitchen, bathroom, rear garden and driveway.

Thunderbolt Way, Tipton



EPC C

Offers Over£70,000

Modern second floor two bedroom apartment briefly comprising lounge/kitchen, bathroom, communal gardens and allocated parking spaces.

City Road, Tividale



EPC D

Offers Over£70,000

Semi detached two bedroom property comprising lounge, kitchen, downstairs bathroom, front and rear gardens.

Northgate Close, Dudley



Awaiting EPC

£150,000

Four bedroom three storey end terraced house with off road parking, garage and front and rear gardens.

Birch Crescent, Tividale



EPC D

Offers Over£110,000

A well presented, semi detached, two bedroom property, comprising lounge/diner, modern kitchen, bathroom, rear garden, driveway and storage garage.

Motoring

Carrera gets turbo and a top speed of 197mph



The new 911 Carrera S which has been given a turbo boost to hit 0 to 62mph in just 3.1 seconds

AS if the 911 Carrera S wasn't fast enough, Porsche has announced details of the Turbo and Turbo S models, ahead of first deliveries in the UK later this year.

As with previous iterations the 911 Turbo has four-wheel drive as standard, although the design is new for this 991-series car and includes active rear steering also destined for the 911 GT3.

Porsche Dynamic Chassis Control (PDCC) active anti-roll system is offered for the first time on the 911

Turbo models, and comes as standard on the 911 Turbo S, together with the Sport Chrono Package Plus incorporating dynamic engine mounts, and Porsche Ceramic Composite Brakes (PCCB). These are also available as an option on the 911 Turbo.

Both the Turbo and Turbo S are powered by a 3.8-litre flat six, with twin turbochargers and direct injection to produce 512bhp in the Turbo and a staggering 552bhp in the Turbo S.

Mated to the seven-speed dual clutch PDK gearbox as standard, both the Turbo and Turbo S also have stop/start fitted, which helps both models claim an impressive 29.1mpg combined.

Even more incredible are the performance figures.

Fitted with the optional Sport Chrono package, the Turbo can accelerate from 0 to 62 mph in 3.2 seconds, faster than the previous 911 Turbo S. Meanwhile, the new 911 Turbo S despatches the sprint to 62mph in just 3.1 seconds. The car's top speed is 197mph.

The new 911 Turbo models are available to order now from Porsche Centres in the UK and Ireland. The Turbo is priced from £118,349 and the Turbo S from £140,852. First right-hand drive deliveries will arrive in September 2013.

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CITROEN C4 GRAND PICASSO 1.8 VTR+ 07 Reg, 5-dr, 7 Seats, Air Con, Alloys, 51k, FSH.....	SOLD
VAUXHALL ZAFIRA 1.6 CLUB 07 Reg, 5-dr, Grey, Air Con, Alloys, 56k, FSH.....	SOLD
VAUXHALL ZAFIRA 1.6 LIFE 59 Reg, 5-dr, Black, Air Con, 43k, FSH.....	SOLD
FORD C-MAX 1.8 TITANIUM 08 Reg, 5-dr, Silver, Air Con, Alloys, Only 12k, FSH.....	£7995
RENAULT GRAND SCENIC 1.5 DCI DYNAMIQUE New Shape, 59 Reg, Air Con, Alloys, 40k, FSH.....	£8295

TOYOTA RAV 4 GRANITE D4D, 05 Reg, 5-dr, Black, Air Con, Alloys, 95k, SH.....	£5995
NISSAN X-TRAIL 2.2 DCI SPORT 04 Reg, 5-dr, Silver, Air Con, Alloys, 67k, FSH, One Owner.....	£5995
KIA SORENTO 2.5 CRDI XS AUTO 06 Reg, 5-dr, Silver, Air Con, Alloys, 64k FSH.....	SOLD
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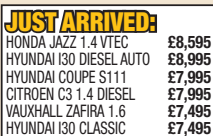
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Second generation electric car is a winner Nissan turns over a new Leaf in the world of electric motors

By Matt Kimberley

NISSAN is on a bit of a roll. While some manufacturers are still working on their first electric cars, Nissan is rolling out the second generation Leaf, with less weight, more range and a design more closely tailored to real-world demands.

The biggest input into the new car has come from existing customers, which explains why it looks so similar to the old one. Nissan says the Leaf gets the highest customer satisfaction scores of any car it makes – as much as 93% – and the people who own ageing models apparently want to stay loyal to it.

But there were some obvious things wrong with the old car. The pale interior came in for a lot of criticism, so European versions of the Leaf II have switched to black, which includes black leather on the top-spec model.

The single old trim option has expanded to the trimvirate of Visia, Acenta and Tekna, making the Leaf more affordable at one end and better equipped at the other.

Combined with the choice of whether to buy the entire car outright or to save £5,000 and lease the batteries, the headline price now starts from under £16,000 after the £5,000 Government grant. Suddenly the Leaf seems a lot more affordable.

The boot is now bigger; at 370 litres it's technically just 10 litres short of those of the new Volkswagen Golf and Seat Leon, although it's not so conveniently shaped.

The curved corners and relatively intrusive wheel arches make an irregularly shaped load space. Still, a 40-litre boost over the old model thanks to some relocated technology means space for one extra suitcase.

This time Nissan has given the European car its own suspension tune. The overly soft, sometimes wobbly ride of the old car was a cause for complaint.

The new set-up is not firmer per se, but is damped with greater conviction to reduce pitch and bounce. It works, too, controlling the Leaf's body movement better than before while retaining the surprisingly good ride quality that defined the first Leaf.

Confidence

It absorbs bumps and potholes with confidence, composure and impressively quietly. Uncommonly so, in fact, compared to almost any rival. The drivetrain is as quiet and vibration-free as you might expect, and the lack of vibration vastly reduces driver fatigue and irritation behind the wheel.

Driving the new Leaf is thoroughly relaxing, with thoughtfully shaped seats that support your spine well. The padding offers a good balance of soft comfort and measured support and the variable-ratio steering is pleasant at all speeds, but it does give something away in terms of initial turn-in response and there's no reach adjustment for the wheel.

The batteries now offer a potential 120 miles or more in ideal conditions from a full charge. A real-world 100 miles should be normal in the summer months. Part of this increase comes from a weight reduction of 32kg, chopped mainly out of two key drivetrain components.

That drivetrain has been modified with new torque mapping and an extra driving mode, labelled B. It increases the 'engine braking' effect to closer replicate being in a low gear in an internal combustion-engined car, increasing the amount of energy the car recuperates in the process.

It's brilliant for hilly routes, where the energy recuperated can be almost as much as the energy you use.

The top-spec Tekna model driven here really feels like a luxurious car, with heated seats even in the back, leather upholstery, climate control, an extensive in-car systems readout and satnav. The only notable flaws are the shiny plastic surrounds for the switches on the door panels.

And yet the price is very reasonable when compared to other top-spec cars. You're getting a very advanced thing, with the capacity to recoup 80 per cent of its full charge in 30 minutes and to cost you less than £2 for every 100 miles you drive. While niggles like the thick, awkwardly positioned A-pillars do merit caution, the overall impression is hugely positive. At this price, maybe now's the time to consider the Leaf.

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Nissan have used input from existing customers in designing the new Leaf electric model



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FOUR BLACK KITTENS, ready to go, litter trained, £40. Telephone 07773 586541.

GERMAN SHEPHERD Pups, two sable, one black. Dogs. Both parents can be seen. £400. 07850 569996 or 01746 761279.

JACK RUSSELL PUPPIES traditional type, all colours, rough and shorthaired, ready now, £200. 07974 447000.

KITTEN six months old, sealpoint rag doll, £200. Telephone 07923 008415.

KITTENS Eight weeks old. Weaned and litter trained. £20 each. 01902 689992 or 07923 678885.

KITTENS lovely tabby and black and white, Mom cross breed, to loving homes, ready now, £35. 07956 946623.

LION HEAD rabbit, brown/white, long haired, 6fters, runner, carry box, £60. 07768 243670.

SHIH TZU Puppies, all colours ready now, £300 / £395. 07867 530504.

TEACUP CHIHUAHUAS, 8 weeks old, 2 boys, 1 girl, £450. 01384 243809 or 07580 201125.

TWO WHITE Kittens, £65 each, 1 white neck £30. 07792 082239.

YORKIE PUPS 3 beautiful little girls, waiting to go to loving homes. With laundry facilities. 07768 687831.

YORKSHIRE TERRIER pups, vet checked, wormed, first vaccination, free puppy pack. 01902 270508.

agiculture

HAVE YOU CHECKED your advertisement today? We would respectfully remind advertisers that it is their responsibility to inform the publishers of any mistakes or inaccuracies on the first day of publication.

farm machinery

WANTED OLD MOTORBIKE Scooter or Honda 50/90. Any condition, for renovation project. 07796 402136/01952 460749.

6 Business

business opportunities

READERS are recommended to take appropriate professional advice before entering any obligations.

commercial premises

CHEAP SMALL INDUSTRIAL UNITS FOR RENT IN BRIERLEY HILL

Suitable for storage
From £20 + VAT p/w
Call Ronnie: 07966 468861

plant, machinery & tools

BANDSAW ELEKTRA Bekum B45450, £350. 07840 507413.

7 Property

coast & country

PORTHMADOG BLACK ROCK SANDS

Big semi with parking for 10 cars plus caravan. Sleeps 5 plus extra room downstairs. Double glazing, rewired, new roof. Only 500 yds to the beach, includes all furniture / carpets, £160,000 only. 01902 608273, 07733 071083.

houses for sale

Are you handcuffed to your property?

We can make you an offer in 48 hours. Call for a no obligation, confidential chat

Jackie & Trevor
01384 861900

Mobile: 07971 223675

SUPERB CONDITION

LLANGYNNIOL, WELSHPOOL

Lovely 3 bedroom fully residential chalet bungalow, double glazed with gardens all round, set in beautiful Mid Wales countryside. Ground fees paid until Sept 2013. New boiler just installed.

£85,000 ono.
01938 811194.

accommodation to let

NOTICE TO READERS It is an offence under the Accommodation Agencies Act 1983, for an Agency to charge a fee simply for the registration of your requirements and/or supplying particulars of premises to let.

BEDDITS Penn/Compton areas. No DSS. Clean, quiet, well maintained with laundry facilities. 07768 687831.

BRIERLEY HILL Single/double rooms in shared house, from £350pcm inc bills. 07655 496072.

CASTLECROFT 1 bed, £100pw. Tetterhall 2 bed Flat £112pw. 01902 340073 or 07770 660636.

CASTLECROFT 1 bed, £100pw. Tetterhall 2 bed Flat £112pw. 01902 340073 or 07770 660636.

DUDLEY clean furnished studio flat, £65-£92pw. 07550 002549.

ESSINGTON modern 1 bed flat, rural location, lovely outlook, no DSS. 01922 400176.

FLAT TO LET WEDNESFIELD

Fully furnished and refurbished to a high standard, with off road parking, would suit working Gent, aged 45 plus, £75pw.

Telephone 01902 304258.

GOLDTHORN PARK, 3 bed semi, CH, private garden, driveway, 6250sqm. 07834 897800.

MODERN DETACHED 2 bed bungalow, immaculate, Colley Gate, Halesowen. 01384 371307.

ONE BED Flat, just refurbished, Wednesbury Town Centre, £380 pcm. No DSS. 01902 885885.

ONE BED flat, Netherdon, one / two bed, newly refurbished, Dudley, 07850 589620.

ONE BED Large flat, first floor, Stafford Road (near McDonalds), £90pw. 07828 459193.

ONE BED self contained flat, Sedgley, suit single, mature person, no DSS. 01902 885885.

PENNFIELD large family home, 4 bed, 2 reception, 2 bath, garden. £130pw 07748 758169.

PENNFIELD Newly refurbished, 2 bed terrace, 2 reception, CH, £395 pcm ex. Agents 01902 710626.

SUPERB, newly refurbished, one bed furnished flat, Sedgley, no DSS, £35 pw. 01902 885885.

WILLENHALL, luxury room, furnished, working person, £50pw. 07401 892938.

WTON superb spacious one bed ground floor flat, with garden. No pets. 07809 605280.

flats for sale

EXCELLENT CONDITION

TYWYN, GWYNEDD

A 2 bedroom refurbished well proportioned and presented apartment. South facing lounge and balcony with beautiful extensive views. Easy (level) walking distance to the beach and town. Low outgoings make it ideal as a permanent or holiday home, share of Freehold. Garage available. Price negotiable.

£95,000 ono.
01654 711199.

mobile homes

MOBILE HOME COVEN

2 beds, nice bathroom, kitchen/diner, lovely lounge, nice garden and lovely views.

£85,000
01902 703570 or 01902 771998

MOBILE HOME, COVEN

Two beds, kitchen diner, nice bathroom, lovely lounge, lovely views.

01902 703570
01902 771998.

properties wanted

NEED TO SELL YOUR HOUSE FAST? Guaranteed Quick Offer. Up to 100% of market value! Call Sue on 0121 285 0317.

PROPERTY WANTED any condition. Long term let. Guaranteed above market rent paid for right property. Call Sarah on 0121 526 6410

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- Any property. Any condition. Anywhere
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All cases sympathetically considered. Friendly staff here to help 7 days a week.

HOUSE WANTED

In Willenhall or close by, for renovation or modernisation, not a big company, Father and Son personal project.

Cash for right property.

Call Diane on
07785 723189.

8 Jobs

RETIRING TO FRANCE?

House with land, letting cottage and pool. Idyllic rural lifestyle with income.

All for £248,000.

Visit <http://francehouseandgiteforalee.weebly.com> for full details.

education

The Earls High School
Furnace Lane, Halesowen, West Midlands, B63 3SL
Tel: 01384 816105
Fax: 01384 816106

Email: recruitment@earls.dudley.sch.uk

TEACHING ASSISTANT - LEVEL 1
One Year Fixed Term Post from September
37 Hours per week, Term-Time Only (39 weeks)
£10,989 - £11,678 p.a.

Applications are invited from enthusiastic individuals who are keen to support students in overcoming their barriers to learning. The person appointed will join a large team of teaching assistants and support staff and work beside students in the mainstream classroom. Candidates must be experienced with children and willing to undertake training. Please contact the school for further details/Application Form.

CLOSING DATE: Friday, 31st May 2013

The Earls High School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is subject to an enhanced criminal records check.

courses

CHRYSLER VOYAGER
51 reg. 3.3V6, 72,000 miles, excellent condition, tax, MoT, used as third vehicle, very reliable.

£2,595 ono.
01902 373141. 07748 196075.

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FREE MEDICAL WHEN BOOKING
A RIGID AND ARTIC COURSE
AT THE SAME TIME.

0121 585 0834
Topgear-hgv@btconnect.com

dentistry

EXPERIENCED DENTAL NURSE required in Sedgley. Two sessions per week. Registration essential. Tel 01902 670749

employment wanted

BRICKLAYER requires full time work. New builds, extensions, garden walls, etc. Own transport. Call 07840 818094

CARPENTER requires full time work, over 25 years experience. Property maintenance, kitchens, second fix, etc. 0761 501701.

motor trade

BALMORAL UK are looking for a Volkswagen/Audi fully qualified Technician to join our busy family run business. We would prefer at least five years Volkswagen/Audi experience. Salary on application. Permanent full time position. Please submit your CV including contact details to alan@balmoralku.com

sales & marketing

NEO STRATEGIES LTD is looking for Telesales staff. OTE £500.00 pw. Basic plus uncapped commission. Call 07814 517852

9 Motoring

cars over 1500

AUDI A3 1.6

White, 58/09 plate, 59,500 miles, tax, MoT, ish, HPI clear, excellent condition, genuine calls only.

£8,150.
Telephone 07973 941324.

BMW 325

CIM SPORT CONVERTIBLE

05 reg, 72k, red, abs, e/w, airbag, e/m, a/c, ish, alarm, MoT, auto, c/i, cruise control, pas, tax Nov, alloys, stereo, CD and stacking system in boot, leather interior, petrol, multi function steering wheel.

More pictures available.
£7,650. 07866 515142.

CHRYSLER VOYAGER

51 reg. 3.3V6, 72,000 miles, excellent condition, tax, MoT, used as third vehicle, very reliable.

£2,595 ono.
01902 373141. 07748 196075.

FIAT GRANDE PUNTO, 07/57, 33,650 miles, red, electric windows, electric mirrors, long MoT, central locking, £2,900. 01384 234546.

ClassifiedAds

01902 317878 • www.expressandstar.com/classifiedads



FORD TRANSIT CONNECT
L200, 1.8cc, 2005, SWB, turbo diesel van, 170k, light use only, new MOT and new tax, lots of service history, side loader R/C, £1,850 o.n.o.
07785 986066.

HONDA CIVIC SE AUTO 1.6
3Dr hatchback, petrol, 05 Reg, genuine low miles 14,000, metallic finish, full MOT, 5 months tax.
Excellent condition.
£4,395.
01384 357924 or 07910 535450.

HONDA JAZZ 1.4 03 reg, Honda fish, only 33k, tax March 14, MoT Feb 14, genuine reason for sale, £2,575 one. Call 07543 481453.

HONDA JAZZ 1.4CC, 2002, genuine 53,000 miles, 1 previous owner, silver, air con, a/c, pas, tax and MoT, 5 door, £1,995 one. 01922 446695.

HYUNDAI I10 5Dr, one owner from new, October 2010, 13,500 miles full tax, £5,000 o.n.o. 01902 687309.

4X4
HYUNDAI TUCSON 4x4
2008, excellent condition, 11 months MoT, fish, 41,000 miles, top range, tax,
£7,950 one.
07864 162282.

HYUNDAI TUCSON 4x4, 2008, excellent condition, 11 months MoT, fish, 41,000 miles, top range, tax, £7,950 one. 07864 162282.

KIA CARENS GS, 2009, silver, fish, under 22,000 miles, tax MoT, a/c, reversing sensors, £4,995 one. 01299 826095.

LAND ROVER MILITARY LIGHTWEIGHT 2.3
petrol, swb, 1978 model first registered 1988, 6 months MoT, hard top, rear seats, loads of new parts and panels, good runner.
£1,995 one. 01384 221545.

★ **LDV MAXUS 2.5cc**, swb, 2005, 89,000 miles, white, MoT, central locking, diesel, tax, stereo, £2,000 one. 01384 401691.

MAZDA MX5 ROADSTER MK2, 1999, MoT April 2014, immaculate, E.R.G. service/garaged, £2,100. 0121 384 7688.

MERCEDES CLK 220 diesel, Coupe, black, 2007, 49,000 miles, 12 months MoT, 3 months tax, £7,350 one. 07782 227220.

MERCEDES VITO Van, 2002, red, MoT, gas, diesel, tax, alloys, CD, swb, £2,500 one. 07957 78844.

MGB CLASSIC ROADSTER lovely condition, £5,200.
Please ring for details.
073 514586.

MITSUBISHI SHOGUN EQUIPE DI D
3.2 diesel, 4 / 4 jeep, 05 plate, silver, top of the range, sport wheel base, 3 door, full MoT, four months tax, in very good condition.
£6,500 one.
07973 524477.

NISSAN QASHQAI Grey, 42,000 miles, full MoT, must sell.
£9,500 one.
Telephone 01384 392260.

PEUGEOT 206CC
2004, black / red leather interior, air con, alloys, CD, central locking, MoT May 2014, good condition.
£2,295 one.
07908 363851.

PEUGEOT 207
2008, 21,800 miles, red, abs, electric windows, air bag, air con, fish, alarm, 12 months MoT, tax, CD, ipod connectivity, ideal first car.
£3,800 one.
07810 508511.

PEUGEOT 307
2.0 HDI sport convertible, diesel, 55 plate, tax, MoT, fully loaded built in sat nav, phone trip computer, 84,000 miles, gold, nice car.
£5,200
07594 475648

★ **PEUGEOT 307CC** Cabriolet, 2005, 72k miles, diablo red, MoT, tax, leather interior, priced to sell, £3,599 one. 07970 606555.

RENAULT KANGOO 2007 van, silver, 1.5 DCI, MoT, tax, SH, average miles, excellent condition, £2,600 one. 07563 326624.

SUZUKI JIMNY 02
2004, 20,000 miles, red, electric windows, air bag, fish, MoT, central locking, pas, tax, stereo, CD, petrol, soft top.
£2,300 one.
07885 218425.

VAUXHALL ASTRA VAN 1.7 CDTI
12 months tax and MoT, 60,000, one owner, 2007 (57) £4,100 one.
07790 637285

VAUXHALL CORSA 1.2 black, 54 plate, 40,000 miles, MoT till Feb 2014, excellent condition, £2,100. 01902 678880 or 07906 733907.

VAUXHALL CORSA 1.3 CDTI, diesel, five door, 2009/09, 57,000 miles, FSH, new MoT, £30 pounds per year road tax, 50+ MPG, air con, E/W, 2 keys, one former keeper, HPI clear, looks and drives lovely.
£4,995 one.
01902 756221

VW POLO SE, 1.4 Tdi, 2006, 125,000 miles, FSH, MoT'd until April 1, 2014, taxed Nov 13, air con, electric mirrors etc. Very clean condition, 70 miles per gallon, bargain £4,200.
07706 585735.

ASTRA VAN CDTI, 1.7 diesel, 54 plate, 12 months MoT, towbar, tax end of August, 5 seater, £1,150 one. Call 01384 410594.

LDV 2.4 CONVOY Dropside Pick-up, 2004, 84k, 12 months MoT, tax, Oct, 12, 100, 07989 802756.

PEUGEOT PARTNER van, 1.9 diesel, 1998, 198,000, MoT / tax Nov, very reliable, smart interior. £850. 07370 659149.

VAUXHALL COMBO 1.4i petrol, M reg, MoT November, good condition for van, 89k, £450 one. 01384 267271 or 07985 30755.

VAUXHALL COMBO CDTI 2009, 1300cc, £2,999 private sale. 07723 501209.

VAUXHALL COMBO VAN 07 Reg, good condition, 1.7 diesel, 12 months MoT, £1,995. 07891 895694.

ASTRA VAN CDTI, 1.7 diesel, 54 plate, 12 months MoT, towbar, tax end of August, 5 seater, £1,150 one. Call 01384 410594.

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VAUXHALL COMBO CDTI 2009, 1300cc, £2,999 private sale. 07723 501209.

VAUXHALL COMBO VAN 07 Reg, good condition, 1.7 diesel, 12 months MoT, £1,995. 07891 895694.

RENAULT MEGANE Scenic 1.9DCI, 02, electric windows, air con, sunroof, leather interior, MoT March, 1 reg, new work for repairs. £1,495. 07956 558434

RENAULT SCENIC 1.6, petrol, 04 reg, 12 months MoT, new cambelt, good condition, £1,395. Telephone 07967 220306.

ROVER 220 diesel, 11 months MoT, taxed, 1 reg, new CL, PAS, economical, 5dr, E/W, £475. 07794 965635.

ROVER 25 1.4, 2001, 5 door, silver, 68,000 miles, e/w, e/s, 6 months tax and MoT, good condition. £695. 01585 6689.

ROVER 25, 2001, 53,000 miles, gold, long MoT, tax, 2 owners both family members, £450 one. 01902 661331.

ROVER 420 2.0, 1993, MoT, tax, PAS, alloys, clean, reliable, tow bar, £375 one. 07917 147032.

ROVER MG ZR 1.4 2003 bubble, tax, MoT, 76k, crack at bottom of screen, £475. 07870 480713.

TOYOTA COROLLA 2.0DXL, 5 door, diesel, 1993, 73k miles, MoT April 2014, private plate, service history, central locking, vgc, £675 one. 07676 45367.

VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.6 LS, X reg, 98k, dark red, MoT Sept, under 100,000 miles, 07990 430629 or 01384 457686.

MORRIS MINOR 1968, tax exempt, 2 months MoT, fish, reliable, £950 one. 07596 213050.

ASTRA VAN CDTI, 1.7 diesel, 54 plate, 12 months MoT, towbar, tax end of August, 5 seater, £1,150 one. Call 01384 410594.

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PEUGEOT PARTNER van, 1.9 diesel, 1998, 198,000, MoT / tax Nov, very reliable, smart interior. £850. 07370 659149.

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LDV 2.4 CONVOY Dropside Pick-up, 2004, 84k, 12 months MoT, tax, Oct, 12, 100, 07989 802756.

★ **MATCHLESS G9 500**, 1956, 500cc, twin, restoration completed, 2012, free tax and MoT. Easy start and rides well. £4,250 one. 07522 802562.

SUZUKI BANDIT
55 Reg, blue, top box, alarm, 18,100 miles, 12 months MoT, short tax.
Very good condition.
£2,500 o.n.o.
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Battling Jack just misses final spot

WEDNESBURY ABC's Jack Wood just failed to make the junior ABA national finals, writes **Craig Birch**.

Wood suffered a majority points loss at Great Barr Leisure Centre despite a valiant effort against his nemesis, Luke McCormack, from Birtley Boys ABC, Northumberland.

He also put him out of the CYP national semi-finals last year and Wood was clearly keen to avenge that defeat by taking the fight to the England international.

Wood got straight on McCormack and forced him to counter-punch on the back foot.

But he struggled with the hand speed of his talented adversary, particularly as fatigue set in, and just missed out on points.

Connor Jones, of Lions ABC, Dudley, reached this weekend's final at Mansfield, his first since the Schoolboys in 2008, after a unanimous points win that hinged on the last round.

After two fairly even sessions, Lions trainer John Shakespeare berated and fired up the 17-year-old and he bombed back out of his corner to win the fight.

He bit down on his gumshield and traded punches with James Thompson, from Wellingtons ABC, Middlesbrough, launching left hooks and right back hands.

He took shots and had to brave it out.

Trio bowl their way to contest

THREE bowlers from Oldbury club The George have reached finals day in the Warwick and Worcester Individual Merit competition.

The George had 17 entrants among the 200-plus bowlers who tackled qualifying rounds at 16 greens.

Two players from each round qualified to make a final-day field of 32.

Mick McGuinness, Ray Broadfield and Eric Winstone were the successful trio who go forward to Ward End Conservative club on June 16.

The final four players in the competition will also qualify for the British Crown Green finals and the accolade of British champion.



Happy Albion players mob Youssuf Mulumbu after he brought the score back to 5-4



Sir Alex Ferguson salutes fans after the remarkable farewell game ended all-square

Remarkable Baggies save the best for last

Albion 5 Manchester Utd 5

THE HAWTHORNS played host to an extraordinary afternoon to round off a remarkable season.

And in the end it had little to do with Sir Alex Ferguson, writes **Steve Madeley**.

The Manchester United manager began the final day of the campaign with star billing as he prepared to end a glittering career. But he ended it with a brief yet significant walk-on role in an exhilarating sporting drama that no-one will forget.

The first 5-5 draw in the English top flight since 1984 – QPR against Newcastle, for the record – will go down as a contender to be the greatest match in Premier League history.

A crowd that threatened at times to become mired in petty squabbles and ugly, tribal disputes ended the day united in admiration for a truly astonishing spectacle.

We could debate the shortcomings of an Albion display that, for a dreadful opening 35 minutes was utterly dismal as United raced into a 3-0 lead.

Character

We could laud the reserves of character that enabled Steve Clarke's side to fight back from 3-0 to 3-2 and then from 5-2 to a barely believable 5-5.

Most of all, we could marvel at the magnificent match-changing contribution of half-time substitute Romelu Lukaku, whose 36-minute hat-trick was the centre-piece of a fabulous thrill-ride.

But it was a day, above all else, to simply revel in the kind of football match that comes around just two or three times in most supporters' lifetimes.

For much of the opening period, half-soaked Baggies were run ragged by Red Devils determined to send their legendary manager out in style. When the visitors led 3-0 with 30 minutes on the clock, Albion fans were fearing their visitors might score more than New Zealand's cricketers had mustered at Lord's hours earlier.



James Morrison celebrates his goal



Five and in – Romelu Lukaku makes it 5-5 in a pulsating match at The Hawthorns

The Baggies defence vanished on six minutes when Javier Hernandez chased a pass into the corner and crossed to the near post, where Shinji Kagawa was unmarked to head home the first. There was further chaos in the Baggies' backline just three minutes later as Antonio Valencia was allowed to race down the right and cross towards Hernandez, with Jonas Olsson turning the ball haplessly into his own net to make it 2-0.

The third goal arrived on the half-hour as Hernandez and Tom Cleverley combined on the edge of the box to feed Alexander Buttner who surged forward into space from left-back and was given all the time he needed to drill home a low, left-footed shot.

The Baggies were imploding and pockets of trouble involving rogue United fans in home sections of The Hawthorns threatened to turn the whole occasion sour.

But what unfolded in the next hour

reminded both sets of fans just why they love football.

Five minutes before half-time, Youssouf Mulumbu seized on a loose pass in midfield and fed Graham Dorrans, who crossed for James Morrison to make it 3-1 and give the hosts a glimmer of hope.

Lukaku then changed the mood inside the ground within five minutes of his introduction. He powered in from the left and bent home a shot that crept inside the far post off the hand of Anders Lindegaard who, in truth, should have done better.

But United restored their two-goal cushion three minutes later with another move down the Baggies' brittle left flank. Makeshift left-back Chris Brunt was beaten by Valencia, whose cross was turned in by Robin van Persie. And they extended the advantage on 63 minutes when Hernandez turned home a cross from Ryan Giggs to

make it 5-2 and, seemingly, settle the game.

Then the remarkable conclusion to a masterpiece of sporting drama began. Albion should have made it 5-3 when Olsson missed a sitter from a Dorrans cross before two goals in a minute.

First substitute Markus Rosenberg split the United defence and Lukaku rounded Lindegaard to score, then Billy Jones pulled a cross back for Youssouf Mulumbu to slide home a shot. And, with four minutes left, Lukaku applied the final twist to an astonishing tale when he bundled home from close range a misdirected cross from Mulumbu to send the Hawthorns into delirium.

As he departed the Premier League scene, Ferguson offered just three words of reflection: "Emotional. Very emotional". In the circumstances, perhaps one of his more famous post-match quotes was more appropriate. "Football. Bloody hell..."

Defence is key as Tigers take win

Barford Tigers Ladies 1 Dudley Ladies 0

RESOLUTE defence helped the Barford hockey side to a gritty single-goal victory over Dudley.

They started the stronger and Barford had to rely on Laura Brain and Jessica Brettell, who threw themselves into tackles. They were ably backed up by Rav Dhillon and Emily Homer at left and right-back respectively.

Despite the pressure, Tigers keeper Cath Hood had only one save to make.

The Tigers gradually began to turn the game, with both Bianca Homer and captain Leanne Homer forcing good saves.

Barford began the second half in better style, with Leanne Homer – playing in an unaccustomed role up front – making some incisive breaks.

She almost scored when put through by a fine Leanne Homer pass. She rode several challenges before hitting a shot that beat the keeper but hit the foot of a Dudley defender.

But the resultant short corner was decisively put away on the second attempt by Sarah Skidmore for the game's only goal.

The victory leaves Barford top of the Summer League as the only team with a 100 per cent record.

The Tigers' next game is on Monday, June 3 against Old Halesonians (7pm).

Men's results: Barford Tigers firsts 5 (Har Sandhu 3, Rajdeep Sadhra, Rajan Bhuhi) Wolverhampton 3, Barford Tigers Cubs 6 (Nay Deegun 4, Baldeep Mangat, Sonny Sarrah) Kidderminster 2, Barford Tigers AFS 1 (Jag Sandhu) Bourville Bees 2.

Loss means more misery

WINLESS Old Hill's miserable start to the Birmingham and District Division One season continued as they crashed to a 103-run defeat at home to Kenilworth Wards.

Elliott Wilson took 4-48 for the hosts but an unbeaten 100 from Warwickshire's Tom Allin saw the visiting side to 271-9. In reply, Dimitri Ratnayake top-scored with 45 but the rest of the batting line-up were blown away for 168.

Halesowen's good form in Division Two continued with a 36-run win away at Water Orton. Kester Mosley contributed 52 to a Hales' 266, before the hosts were dismissed for 230.



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Season ends on high with title win

Trysull Tigers U16 0
Halas Hawks U16 2

HALAS HAWKS finished their season as league and cup double winners following a 2-0 win at second-placed Trysull Tigers.

Victory came courtesy of goals from Josh March and Dan Willets.

Manager Ant Wilkes said: "Some of the players have been with me at the club from the age of seven."

"Having also reached the semi-final of the County Cup, it is fitting that their time with Halas is ending on such a high note."

Old Wulfrunians U14 3
Halas Hawks U14 5

A Cameron Milne hat-trick helped Halas end the season in style with a well-deserved 5-3 victory over Old Wulfrunians.

Halas were kept in the game early on by some excellent goalkeeping from man of the match Daniel Johnson, but Shane Billingham fired the Hawks in front from their very first attack.

Milne then put Halas two up before Old Wulfs pulled one back.

But Halas kept their heads and added two more before the break through Milne and Cain Brissett.

The second half again saw Old Wulfs on top for parts of the game and they got their second goal.

However, Milne had the last word when smashing home his third and Halas' fifth.

■ Halas Hawks Under-14 girls won the Wolves Community Cup, winning four and drawing one of their games held at Molineux.

Dogs maul the Ravens

Birmingham Bulldogs 68

NE Worcestershire Ravens 18
BIRMINGHAM Bulldogs bounced back from their previous week's rugby league defeat against Telford with an emphatic Midlands Premier victory.

Brum scored straight from the kick-off, Matt Dudley's break ending with stand-off Nic Evans crossing in the left corner. Next came a scorching run and try from debutant Dan Ventrella; centre Sam Edgar goaled.

Adam Burton and Dudley also crossed as the home side established a 24-0 advantage before half-time.

Ravens worked hard for their second-half points, but the Bulldogs powered clear for a 50-point success.

Jakab is hero in cup victory

Black Country Rangers 4 W'ton Casuals 3

SUBSTITUTE Jozsef Jakab was the hero as Black Country Rangers retained the JW Hunt Cup with a 4-3 win over Wolverhampton Casuals at Molineux.

Casuals had stormed back from two goals down to lead 3-2 when Jakab came on with 12 minutes to go. Within three minutes he had netted from close range then struck in the 90th minute.

Paul Oakley gave Rangers an early lead and man of the match Jordan Nadat made it 2-0 after 55 minutes. Then



Neil Matthews in Plains action. Picture: Stuart Woodier, www.rallyaction.co.uk

Matthews takes top place at The Plains

Rallying

RALLY drivers Neil Matthews and Scott Faulkner enjoyed success at The Plains rally in Welshpool, Powys.

Matthews, from Halesowen, finished first in class B10 in his 1600 Vauxhall Nova while Solihull's Faulkner was 20th overall and seventh in class. Faulkner is now sixth overall in the REIS - Get Connected BTRDA Rally Series.

Ludlow's Freddy Brick, with his father Dave as co-driver, came first in the 1400cc single car class.

Scottish star Euan Thorburn, from the Borders town of Duns, was the overall Plains winner.

Fighter gorges at Cheddar

JULIE CHARLESWORTH was the big cheese at a martial arts event in Cheddar, Somerset.

The four-time world champion was one of three fighters from Halesowen-based Charlesworth Martial Arts to take part in the last man standing kumite.

The 42-year-old looked to have her work cut out against a string of talented younger fighters.

But she showed there is no substitute for experience as she saw off all her rivals to win the ladies' section in the War Memorial Hall.

Also fighting were 15-year-old Reuben Charlesworth and Kieran Cox, 19 - both teenagers fresh from victories in the German Open.

Both fighters made the semi-finals of their respective sections, Charlesworth losing by a point in a fierce fight against the eventual tournament winner.

Cox also fought well, but narrowly missed out on a place in the final.

ALBION LUCK RUNS OUT FOR FORTUNE

ALBION will offer fans' favourite Zoltan Gera a new contract if he proves his fitness - but Marc-Antoine Fortune's career at The Hawthorns could be over.

The club have opened talks with defender Steven Reid over a new deal despite injuries preventing him activating an automatic option to stay at The Hawthorns.

And Gera will be offered a contract if he recovers successfully from a cruciate ligament injury - his second in two seasons - that has sidelined him since January.

by Steve Madeley

The Baggies have released Fortune, although they have not ruled out offering the Frenchman a contract later in the summer.

They have opened talks with Dynamo Kiev over a permanent deal for on-loan full-back Goran Popov, but opted against paying the pre-agreed fee that would have activated a move automatically.

Gonzalo Jara Reyes and Jerome Thomas have been released, while Albion have sent Yassine El Ghannasy back to Ghent after his ill-fated loan.

Spells

Sporting and technical director Richard Garlick said: "Both Jerome and Gonzalo have played important roles in helping the club reach and stay in the Premier League since joining us four years ago."

"They have found first-team opportunities harder to come by this season and had spells out on loan."

"Steven's an important figure both on and off the field and we are in negotiations with him about a new deal. We have not offered Marc-Antoine a new deal at this stage, but he remains under consideration as we weigh up all options."

"Goran's loan has also come to an end and we plan

to hold talks with Dynamo Kiev to decide his future."

Garlick has confirmed the Baggies will continue to monitor Romelu Lukaku after his stunning season on loan from Chelsea.

"He will report back to Chelsea for pre-season, as planned, and it will be down to them whether Romelu is made available for loan again," said Garlick.

Meanwhile, Albion have netted a record Premier League windfall of £48.3m according to new figures.

The Baggies enjoyed their most lucrative season thanks to a best-ever Premier League finish of eighth under Steve Clarke.

They picked up £46.6m last season and were ninth in the Premier League's TV money table.

All 20 Premier League clubs picked up an equal share of £13.8m from domestic TV revenue and £18.9m from the sale of broadcast rights overseas.

The remainder was handed out in varying facility fees for broadcasts and 'merit payments' - the prize money that increases as clubs climb the table.

Albion claimed a club record merit payment of £9.8m for finishing eighth.

Letford grabs title for unbeaten Town Ladies



Celebration time for Halesowen Town Ladies after a gripping odd-goal-in-five win gave them the championship

STAR striker Rachel Letford's goal clinched the Birmingham County Women's Division Two title for Halesowen.

Letford's clinical finish sealed victory over second-placed Rushall, who would have taken the crown themselves with a win.

But it was the Yeltz who were left to celebrate as they finished the league campaign unbeaten with 22 wins and a brace of draws from 24 matches.

However, it was no easy ride for Halesowen who led 2-0, were pegged back to 2-2 and then saw Rushall hit the bar with a penalty.

Rushall United Ladies 2
Halesowen Town Ladies 3

The visitors began well and Lyndsey Glover seized on a rebound to score after just two minutes.

Ten minutes later, Shannie Jennings' well-taken goal made it two. Angie Morley and Jennings both hit the crossbar, Jennings also missing another good chance in what threatened to be a rout.

But the latter part of the first half was all Rushall and they scored twice to leave the teams level at the break.

Rushall, needing the win, pushed on

and despite good defending by Charlotte Byatt and Dominique McKee, they had their chance from the spot but the ball cannoned off the bar. Halesowen responded as Dani Reade and Sian Whithall combined to release speedy Letford for the decisive finish.

Manager Scott McKee said: "We started this season with nothing, getting players in from here and there and growing as a squad. We have finished as a well-polished, powerful unit. Winning the league without losing a game is no mean feat."

Interested players can call McKee on 07809 636160 about next season.

Truman gets another shot

CHRIS TRUMAN has been given a second chance to become a British Masters champion.

The Erdington-born lightweight-welterweight lost a controversial points decision against Amir Unsworth in March for the crown.

But now 'The Trumator' looks set to face Liverpool's Stephen Jennings for a shot at one of the titles.

The fight tops the bill of It's-A-Bout-Boxing at the Institute, Digbeth, Birmingham on June 29. Tickets are available on 0845 4673930 or 07888 870650.

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